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PART XIV.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING THE

AFFAIR OF TURKEY.

June 1877.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
1	Mr. Layard . ..	448	May 14, 1877	Copy of the law authorizing proclamation of state of siege at Constantinople if necessary. Asks opinion as to its extension to foreigners resident there.	1
2	„ „	470	17,	Turkey and Persia. Outrages at Medina and the islet on the Euphrates. Conversation with Mohsin Khan	3
3	„ „	471	17,	Outrages by Circassians. Instructions have been sent to Provincial authorities ..	4
4	„ „	472	17,	Russian vessels in the Suez Canal. Same measures must be applied as in other parts of the Empire	4
5	„ „	474 Confidential	19,	Khalil Sheriff Pasha's language respecting Egypt and the rule of the Khedive ..	4
6	„ „	475 Confidential	19,	Information from Grand Vizier of concentration of a Servian force on Bulgarian frontier ..	5
7	„ „	476 Confidential	19,	Arrival of and interviews with the Austrian, German, and Italian Representatives ..	5
8	„ „	477 Most Conf.	19,	Russian influence in Mount Athos. Conversation with the Grand Vizier, and report by Mr. Sandison as to the possibility of the Porte putting a check on and protecting Greek interests	6
9	„ „	484	21,	State of Adrianople district. Conversation of Mr. Blunt with Grand Vizier	8
10	„ „	485	21,	Two "Fetvas" (Decrees) of the Sheik-ul-Islam published at Constantinople, declaring the right of the Sultan to send soldiers to the war, and conferring the title of "Ghazy" ..	9
11	„ „	486 Very Conf.	22,	Respecting Austrian policy as to the Slav provinces of Turkey. Letter from Vienna to the Polish Committee at Constantinople. (See his despatch No. 462)	10
12	„ „	487	22,	Suggestion by Consul Holmes that Mehmet Ali Pasha should command in Bosnia. He could not serve under the Mushir Suleiman Pasha	11
13	„ „	488	22,	Alleged barbarities by Turkish troops near Podgoritza. Orders for minute inquiries sent. (See Consul Green's despatch No. 40)	11
14	„ „	489 Confidential	23,	Defences of Russian ports in Black Sea. Sends Memorandum by Commodore Stopford of the "Helicon"	12
15	„ „	490	23,	Circassian outrages at Toultcha. Commission sent by Porte to inquire and report ..	12
16	„ „	491	23,	Address to the Porte from Bulgarians of Philippopolis. Represents feelings of majority ..	13
17	„ „	494	23,	State of affairs in districts of Salonica, Ineboli, and Adrianople. Reports from Consular Agents	14
18	„ „	495	23,	Movements of one Constantine Aravandinos. Vice-Consul at Prevesa sends letter from Janina respecting	16
19	„ „	496	23,	Average numbers in Bulgarian families near Philippopolis. List by Mr. Stoney of the Relief Committee	17
19*	„ „	497	23,	Danube navigation. Count Zichy satisfied with assurances of Porte	18*
20	„ „	498 Most Conf.	23,	Report respecting Mount Athos by Mr. Abbot, late German Consul at Salonica. (See No. 8)	19
21	„ „	499	23,	Bulgarian amnesty. Copy of a letter to Said Pasha, and report by Mr. Blunt. Hopes it will shortly be issued. (See his despatch No. 464)	26

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
22	Mr. Layard . ..	500 Confidential	May 23, 1877	Servian intentions respecting Turkey. Conversation with Count Zichy	28
23	„ „	501	23,	Conversation with the Servian Agent. Servian assurances. Intrigues of Russian Consul-General there	29
24	„ „	502	23,	Circassian excesses in district of Enos. Report by Vice-Consul, through Mr. Blunt ..	29
25	Mr. Thomson ..	55	Apr. 28,	Persian grievances against Turkey. Memorandum by the Persian Foreign Minister embodying	30
26	Consul Blunt ..	15	May 16,	Outrages at Kirk Kilissa. Report by Vice-Consul Dupuis. Respecting outrages at Bourgas and Palaskioi. (See his despatch No. 13)	31
27	„ „ ..	16	16,	Greek Archbishop of Adrianople reports a friendly spirit prevailing between Musaulmans and Christians	33
28	Count Andrassy to Count Zichy	..	22,	Bosphorus, Dardanelles, and Danube navigation. Austrian demands and objections to measures taken by the Porte, which Consul Zichy is to lay before the Porte	34
29	Lord A. Loftus ..	279	27,	Danube navigation. Reply of Prince Gortchakow to his note. (See his despatch No. 269)	37
30	Lord Odo Russell ..	221 Secret	27,	Conversation with Prince Bismarck. Assurances of co-operation in endeavours for pacification	37
31	Porte to Musurus Pasha	Telegraphic	29,	Contraband landed at Cattaro for Montenegro by Austrian vessel "Vincenzo"	39
32	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	30,	Some young Turkish officials have been removed from the capital, having been implicated in the recent Softa demonstrations	39
33	Memorandum communicated by Russian Chargé d'Affaires	..	June 1,	Protest against stoppage by Turkey of telegraphic communication by the Odessa cable	39
34	Mr. Layard . ..	Telegraphic	May 31,	Neutrals on Danube. May ascend above Timok on certain conditions, which Austria accepts	40
35	To Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	June 1,	Colonel Wellesley should accept invitation to accompany Russian army	40
36	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	1,	Danube navigation. Has he made similar representation as Austria? (See his No. 497)	41
37	Consul Sandwith ..	21	May 12,	Arrival of Mediterranean squadron from Corfu. No foreign ships of war on the station at present	41
38	„ „ ..	22	12,	Opening of the General Assembly. Members very refractory. None present after the first day, the 10th..	41
39	„ „ ..	23 Confidential	12,	Proposal of Christian deputies that Crete become a Principality under British protection..	41
40	Vice-Consul Biliotti ..	20	15,	Several cases of attacks by armed Turks on Greek households	42
41	Mr. Layard . ..	505 Confidential	24,	Massacre by Russians of Circassians in the Caucasus. Sultan wants to know what impression they produce on the British public	44
42	„ „	506	24,	Russian invasion of Armenia. Report by Sir Arnold Kemball	44
43	„ „	507 Very Conf.	24,	Private letter from Sir A. Kemball. Inability of the Turks to cope with the Russians ..	46
44	„ „	508	24,	Danube navigation. Despatch from Count Andrassy to Austrian Ambassador at Porte, and exposé of the steps taken by him in consequence	47
45	„ „	509	25,	Softa demonstration against Redif and Mahmoud Damat Pashas. Report from Mr. Sandison	49
46	Mr. Vivian . ..	145	25,	Departure of Prince Hassan with 6,000 Egyptian troops from Cairo. Advice to Cherif Pasha..	50
47	Lord Lyons. ..	448 Confidential	June 1,	Observations of Duc Decazes as to chances of peace	50
48	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	103	May 26,	Torpedoes in Danube. Reckless way Turks are laying. Note by Moldo-Wallachian Foreign Minister	51
49	Mr. Layard. ..	130 Telegraphic	June 1,	Torpedoes in Dardanelles. Mines in contemplation at lower entrance of Straits ..	52

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
50	Mr. Layard . ..	131 Telegraphic Very Conf.	June 1, 1877	Sultan's sentiments respecting the war expressed to the German Ambassador ..	52
51	„ „	132 Telegraphic	1,	Danube navigation. Austrian representation. Will send in a similar one to-morrow ..	52
52	Mr. Plunkett ..	Telegraphic	1,	Russian ship at Philadelphia is the "Kraiser." Russian fleet from New York will call first at Flores, in the Azores	52
53	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	1,	Colonel Wellesley starts at once. May he draw for his expenses?	53
54	Mr. Layard ..	133 Telegraphic	2,	Porte again alarmed at Servia being encouraged by Russia to declare war	53
55	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	2,	Russian movement against Kizl Ervad ..	53
56	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	2,	Conditions on which neutrals may ascend Danube. What are they, and has Austrian Ambassador agreed to them (See No. 34) ..	53
57	Consul Sandwith ..	24	May 19,	Demands of Christian deputies in Cretan General Assembly. List of, and petition to the Governor..	53
58	Mr. Stuart, . ..	91 Confidential	27,	Reports from Greek Consuls at Larissa and Volo, showing deplorable state of affairs on Ottoman side of frontier	55
59	Mr. Stanley ..	23 Confidential	27,	Circassian cavalry sent back from the Danube. Supposed not to be trusted	57
60	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	June 2,	Persian troops in Khorassan. Details respecting	57
61	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	2,	Turks marching into Montenegro from Podgoritza	58
62	Mr. Layard . ..	134 Telegraphic	2,	Neutrals on Danube (see No. 56). Conditions agreed to and those rejected by Austria. Hopes question is finally settled	58
63	„ „	135 Telegraphic	2,	War news from Sir A. Kemball. General retreat of Turks reported	58
64	„ „	136 Telegraphic	3,	War news from Consul at Erzeroum ..	58
65	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	3,	Emperor left for head-quarters. Count Schouvaloff will be in London Friday. Colonel Wellesley leaves on Tuesday	59
66	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic Very Conf.	3,	Austrian reply to note of 19th. Count Andrassy has authorized its being read to him..	59
67	Mr. Layard ..	137 Telegraphic	3,	Slaughter of Circassians who attempted to succour Kars	59
68	Consul-General White	54	May 14,	Second mission of Colonel Catargi to Russian head-quarters. Uneasiness in Servia ..	59
69	„ „ ..	55	15,	Audience of M. Kartzov with Prince Milan to take leave, and to make an official communication	60
70	„ „ ..	56	17,	Departure of M. Kartzov	60
71	„ „ ..	57	19,	Instructions and advice to Slavonic agents in Bosnia	61
72	„ „ ..	59	20,	State of affairs and Russian advice to Servia to keep quiet	61
73	„ „ ..	60	21,	Respecting Prince Milan's proposed visit to the Emperor, and the convocation of the Skouptchina	61
74	„ „ ..	61	24,	Russian views in December 1876 respecting Servian co-operation	62
75	„ „ ..	62	25,	Respecting employment by Russian Commander-in-chief on the Danube of well-known Slavophils in official capacity ..	62
76	„ „ ..	64	25,	Generally expected that Servia will ere long be dragged into the war by Russia	63
77	„ „ ..	65	26,	Serious communication to Roumania by Austria, France, and England. Interview of his French colleague with Prince Milan. Austria is the only Power to interfere effectually ..	63
78	„ „ ..	66	28,	Prince Milan will probably visit the Emperor of Russia at Ploiesti	64
79	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	108	28,	Great assiduity in enrolment of Bulgarian volunteers	64
80	Consul Holmes ..	32 Consular	22,	Arrival of Mahzer Pasha, the new Governor of Bosnia	65
81	Sir A. Buchanan ..	467	22,	Danube navigation. Has asked that Austrian Ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople should give copy of their instructions of the 6th instant to Her Majesty's Representatives at these capitals..	65

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
82	Sir A. Buchanan ..	469 Confidential	May 22, 1877	Roumanian declaration of independence. Considered by Count Andrassy as provisionally unimportant	65
83	„ „ ..	484 Very Conf.	30,	Conversation with French Ambassador respecting possible Russian occupation of Constantinople	65
84	„ „ ..	486	31,	Number of insurgents under Despotovitch not more than 1,000. (See Consul Holmes' No. 45)	66
85	Lord A. Loftus ..	275 Confidential	27,	Conversation with Count Schouvaloff ..	66
86	Consul Sir C. Sebright	7	30,	Consular Agent at Avlona. Importance of the Porte conciliating the Chimariots	67
87	Mr. Macdonell ..	224	June 2,	Swiss subjects and interests in Turkey remain under German protection	68
88	„ „ ..	225 Confidential	2,	Four German officers left for the Russian headquarters on the Danube	68
89	Count Beust ..	..	2,	Respecting inefficacy of blockade of Russian ports pointed out by Russia	68
90	Mr. Layard ..	138 Telegraphic	3,	Kurdish depredations in Persia. Porte is informed by Persian Minister respecting ..	69
91	To Consul Sandwith..	Telegraphic	4.	Foreign men-of-war stationed or calling at Crete. Admiralty want occasional intelligence of	69
92	To Lieut.-Col. Nixon.	Telegraphic	4,	Crew of Residency steamer. To communicate with Indian Government respecting ..	69
93	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	4,	General Lomakin reports defeat of Tekkes at Kizl Arvad	69
94	Consul Reade ..	Telegraphic	4.	Bulgarians fear massacres on passage of Russians. Consuls should remain at their posts	69
95	To Mr. Layard ..	160	4,	State of siege at Constantinople (see No. 1). Her Majesty's Government expect assurances respecting foreigners to be strictly adhered to	70
96	Mr. Taylour Thomson	62	May 4,	Conversation with Persian Foreign Minister respecting their policy as to Turkey and Russia	70
97	„ „ ..	63 Confidential	7.	Russia asks Persia's intentions as to her attitude in the present war	71
98	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	June 5,	Bucharest in state of siege. Giurgevo in flames	71
99	To Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	5.	Colonel Wellesley should send in claim for travelling expenses from time to time to War Office. An advance to be made if wanted	71
100	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	5,	Torpedoes in Danube. Reckless way Turks are laying. Urge Porte to take proper precautions	71
101	„ „ ..	162	5,	Extending above	72
102	Consul Kirby Green..	46	May 24,	Capture of two Mirdites by the Porte. Capitan Gion and the Rev. Don Primo. Ordered to be sent to Constantinople ..	72
103	„ „ ..	48	26,	Guns received in Montenegro from Germany and Italy	72
104	„ „ ..	50	27,	The last ban of reserves are being sent to Podgoritza	73
105	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	June 5.	Battle near Spuz. Turks claim victory ..	73
106	Consul-General White	Telegraphic	6,	Servian preparations do not suppose immediate war. Nothing known of presence of Russian officers	73
107	Mr. Layard ..	139 Telegraphic	6,	War news from Erzeroum. Russians taken Olti	73
108	To Mr. Layard ..	164	6,	Outrages by Circassians. Approve representation in No. 3	74
109	„ „ ..	165	6.	Alleged mutilation of Mirdites. Approves steps in No. 13	74
110	„ „ ..	166	6,	Bulgarian amnesty. Approves his steps and Mr. Blunt's, as reported in No. 21 ..	74
111	„ „ ..	167	6.	State of Adrianople. Approves Mr. Blunt's advice to Grand Vizier, reported in No. 9 ..	74
112	„ „ ..	168	6,	Turkey and Persia. Approves his proceedings in No. 2	75
113	Consul Sanderson ..	Telegraphic	6,	Czar passed this morning by rail	75
114	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	6,	Battle near Spuz. Montenegrins claim victory..	75
115	Mr. Layard . .	140 Telegraphic	7.	Prohibition of cypher telegrams for Consuls and Military Attachés in Europe.. ..	75

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
116	Mr. Layard . .	141 Telegraphic	June 7, 1877	Regulations for ships arriving at Dardanelles at nightfall	75
117	„ „	143 Telegraphic	7,	Persian troops retired from Mohammerah. Question of islet settled. From Bagdad ..	76
118	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	7,	Martial law in Roumania, except in five mountain districts	76
119	Mr. Stuart	Telegraphic	7,	Coalition Government under Presidency of Admiral Canaris	76
120	Mr. Macdonell ..	Telegraphic Confidential	7,	Count Schouvaloff passed through Berlin direct for London	76
121	To Consul-General White	Telegraphic	7,	Is Captain Heneage available to go to Bucharest?	76
122	To Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield	Telegraphic	7,	Proposes to send Captain Heneage to Bucharest. Does he require a messenger? ..	76
123	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	7,	Inquires as to position of Russian corps ..	77
124	To Consul Sanderson..	Telegraphic	7.	Ditto	77
125	To Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	7,	Coal for merchant steamers at Port Saïd. Will Russian Government come to some arrangement to relieve anxiety of shipowners respecting	77
126	Consul Sanderson ..	50	1,	Turkish turret-ship blown up near Matchin. Military news	77
127	Lieut.-Col. Siborne ..	14	1,	Danube Commission. Correspondence with Ottoman authorities on subject of hoisting its flag on its buildings, vessels, &c. ..	78
128	Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha (communicated June 8)	..	5,	Protest against declaration of war and independence by Roumania	80
129	Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff (communicated June 8)	..	May 14/26,	The war and English interests. Russian answer to English note defining	81
130	Memorandum ..	..	June 8,	Conversation of Count Schouvaloff with Lord Derby. Conditions on which Russia will make peace before crossing the Balkans ..	82
131	M. Arapoff to M. de Bülow	..	May 12/24,	Calling attention to stoppage by Porte of communication by Odessa submarine cable..	84
132	Lord Lyons ..	Telegraphic	June 7,	Due Decazes as to prospect of proposing peace	85
133	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	7,	Franco-English protectorate of Egypt and Syria suggested by Due Decazes	85
134	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	7,	Persian military movements	55
135	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	8,	Island in Euphrates. Persian Government accept terms proposed by Porte for withdrawal from	85
136	Mr. Layard ..	142 Telegraphic	7,	Telegram from Tehran respecting Turkish military movements	86
137	„ „ ..	145 Telegraphic	7,	As to probable attitude of Greece	86
138	„ „ ..	146 Telegraphic	8,	Establishment of Turkish Consul at Peshawur. Grand Vizier has asked if Her Majesty's Government would object to	86
139	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	8,	Movement of Russian corps d'armée ..	86
140	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	8,	Messenger would be a convenience	87
141	Consul Sanderson ..	Telegraphic	8,	Russian military movements	87
142	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	8,	Operations in Montenegro	87
143	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	8,	Ditto	87
144	To Lord Lyons, &c. ..	338	8,	State of siege at Constantinople. Steps taken by Her Majesty's Government. What have other Governments done?	87
145	To Lord A. Loftus ..	226 Confidential	8,	Conditions of peace. Conversation with Count Schouvaloff	88
146	To Mr. Vivian ..	79	8,	Egypt and Turco-Russian war. Approves conduct as reported in No. 46	88
147	To Mr. Layard ..	180 A	8,	Roumania. No. 128 communicated by Musurus Pasha. Her Majesty's Government will not take any action	88
148	To Lord A. Loftus ..	226 Confidential	8,	See No. 145	89
149	To Mr. Layard ..	182 Confidential	8,	Transmitting copy of Russian answer (No. 129)	89
150	To Mr. Stuart ..	30 Confidential	8,	Attitude and policy of Great Britain. Copies of correspondence respecting	89
151	Mr. Layard ..	510 Secret	May 24,	Porte and Montenegro. Sultan thinks England might mediate	90
152	„ „ ..	512	25,	Italian Consular appointments in Albania ..	90
153	„ „ ..	513	25,	Christian Dragoon regiment in Lebanon As to its retention in Syria	91

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
154	Mr. Layard ..	514 Confidential	May 25, 1877	Turkey and Persia. Steps taken to arrange difficulties between	91
155	" " ..	515	25,	Escape of Greek brigands at Janina. Has spoken to Grand Vizier	92
156	" " ..	516	25,	Remarks on refusal of Cretan Christians to elect Representatives to the Turkish Chambers	93
157	" " ..	517	25,	State of siege at Constantinople. Decree establishing	93
158	" " ..	518	26,	State of affairs at Kustendji	94
159	" " ..	519 Most Conf.	26,	Grand Vizier says he would be willing to hand over Roumania to Austria	94
160	" " ..	521 Secret	25,	Presentation of Sir C. Dickson to the Sultan. Conversation with His Majesty respecting Turkish military prospects in Asia and Europe	95
161	" " ..	522	26,	Softa demonstration of May 25. Details and remarks respecting Mr. Butler Johnstone's connection with	97
162	" " ..	523 Most Conf.	26,	Respecting Mr. Butler Johnstone's proceedings at Constantinople	98
163	" " ..	525	28,	Encyclical of Greek Patriarch, enjoining followers of Greek Church to support the Sultan in resisting Russian invasion ..	99
164	" " ..	526 Most Conf.	28,	Respecting intrigues in favour of ex-Sultan Murad	101
165	" " ..	528	28,	Appointment of a Military Commission to control and inquire into all contracts, &c., connected with Turkish armies	102
166	" " ..	529	28,	Conscription of Christians. Opposition to. To be only applied to Constantinople at present	102
167	" " ..	530	28,	Banishment of certain persons in virtue of state of siege	102
168	" " ..	531	28,	Porte and Persia. Note from Persian Minister to Safvet Pasha, disclaiming any hostile intentions on part of Persian Government	103
169	" " ..	535 Very Conf.	29,	The Porte and Greece. Rumoured change in Greek Representatives at Constantinople distasteful to Porte. Mr. Layard's efforts at conciliation	103
170	" " ..	537 Confidential	29,	Hobart Pasha's departure for Black Sea fleet. Difficulties of his position	104
171	" " ..	538 Confidential	30,	Turkish finance. Mr. Foster's mission and M. Frémy's plans	104
172	" " ..	539	30,	Landing of Greek brigands near maritime terminus of the Philippopolis and Adrianople railway	105
173	" " ..	540 Confidential	30,	Military operations in Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor. Report by Sir C. Dickson on	106
174	" " ..	543	30,	Sketch of Baker Pasha's scheme for reorganization of Turkish mounted police. List of officers selected for appointments . ..	108
175	" " ..	546 Most Conf.	30,	His efforts to prepare the way for peace. Detailed report upon the situation ..	109
176	" " ..	548	30,	State of siege at Constantinople. Has represented to Porte importance of avoiding difficulties with foreign Powers in carrying out law of	114
177	" " ..	549	30,	State of Jerusalem. Porte promises that present garrisons shall not be withdrawn ..	115
178	" " ..	550	30,	Landing of Greek pirates near Dede-Agatch. Safvet Pasha promises dispatch of a man-of-war	115
179	" " ..	551	30,	Gallipoli district. Vice-Consul Odoni's Report. Complaints of Circassian depredations	115
180	" " ..	552	30,	Respecting reconstruction of houses in burnt villages. Non-payment of stipend to the priests	116
181	" " ..	553	31,	Turkey and Persia. Porte promises seriously to consider question of Kerbela and other holy places frequented by Persians ..	117
182	" " ..	554	31,	Alleged decapitation of a Kutchi shepherd. *Note verbale* from Porte denying.. ..	117

No	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
183	Mr. Layard ..	555	May 31, 1877	*Note verbale* from Porte announcing evacuation of Sulina	118
184	" " ..	556	31,	Navigation of Danube. Austrian note to Porte. Respecting permission for detained vessels to ascend beyond junction of Timok .	118
185	Vice-Consul Billiotti ..	23 Political	21,	State of Trebizond-Erzeroum road	119
186	" " .	24	23,	Transport of artillery and military stores to Erzeroum. Report on difficulties ..	119
187	" " ..	25 Political	25,	Report on fall of Ardahan and effect produced.	121
188	Consul Reade ..	7 Political	22,	Report on outrages committed in Roustchouk vilayet. Sadyk Pasha's anger at removal of Shevket Pasha	121
189	Consul Blunt ..	17 Political	28,	Courteous reception of Bulgarian Exarch at Adrianople and Philippopolis by Ottoman authorities. His Holiness attributes events of last year to foreign agency	122
190	Acting Consul Barker.	40 Political	28,	Report on crimes and disorders in Salonica district	123
191	" " ..	41	29,	Efforts made by Salonica authorities to send every available man to the war	125
192	Acting Consul Joly ..	2	30,	Outrages at Kinik, at Avar, and at Yayakioi..	126
193	Mr. Stuart.. ..	94 Confidential	31,	Arrival of arms and ammunition at Syria ..	127
194	Lord Lyons ..	473 Very Conf.	June 7,	Views of Russian Government with regard to peace. Conversation with Duc Decazes ..	128
195	" " ..	474 Very Conf.	7,	Further respecting above	129
196	" " ..	475 Secret	7,	Duc Decazes' proposal for a joint British and French Protectorate over Egypt and Syria..	130
197	" " ..	476 Secret	7,	Objections to the above	130
198	Mr. Layard ..	147 Telegraphic	8,	Sultan wishes to send a mission to Afghanistan	131
199	" " ..	148 Telegraphic	8,	State of affairs in the Dobrutsha	131
200	" " ..	149 Telegraphic	8,	Turkish Chamber will authorize a forced loan of about 4,000,000*l.*	131
201	" " ..	150 Telegraphic	8,	Torpedoes placed in the Bay of Suda, in Crete	131
202	" " ..	151 Telegraphic	8,	Telegram to Colonel Lennox. Cypher telegrams will be refused, but exception to be made secretly in his favour	132
203	" " ..	152 Telegraphic	9,	Telegram from Sir A. Kemball. Military movements in Asia	132
204	" " ..	153 Telegraphic	9,	Telegram from Sir A. Kemball. Kars closely invested	132
205	" " ..	154 Telegraphic	9,	Positions of Turkish torpedoes in the Danube have been carefully marked	132
206	" " ..	155 Telegraphic	9,	Mission from the Sultan of Turkey to the Emperor of Morocco	133
207	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	9,	Turks reported to have carried the entrance to the Douga Pass. Possible terms of peace between Russia and Turkey	133
208	To Lord A. Loftus ..	228 Confidential	9,	Copy of memorandum of conversation with Count Schouvaloff, No. 130	133
209	To Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield	37	9,	Roumanian prohibition of navigation on the Danube	133
210	Consul Sandwith ..	25	May 25,	Conversation with Christian deputies of the Cretan General Assembly	134
211	" " ..	26	26,	Impolitic action of the Cretan authorities ..	134
212	" " ..	27	27,	Desecration of a church	135
213	Mr. Vivian ..	154	31,	Reasons why the Egyptian contingent has not yet started	136
214	" " ..	158 Confidential	June 3,	Conversation with the Khedive. Fanatical feeling will be repressed	136
215	Mr. Stuart.. ..	102	2,	Arrest of agents organizing bands for the invasion of Turkey	137
216	Sir A. Paget ..	233 Confidential	5,	Signor Melegari considers the free navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus for ships of war to be inadmissible	137
217	" " ..	235 Confidential	6,	Conversations with Signor Melegari and Count Tornielli respecting mediation and the policy of Austria	138
218	Mr. Stuart.. ..	Telegraphic	9,	No intention on the part of Greece to invade Turkey at present	139

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
219	To Mr. Macdonell ..	214	June 10, 1877	Telegraphic communication with Odessa. Conversation with Count Munster ..	139
220	" " ..	215	10,	Alarming rumours from Syria. A British and a German ship of war are to proceed there..	140
221	Consul Moore ..	10	May 26,	Military force in the Jerusalem district ..	140
222	Consul Watkins ..	2	28,	Has requested Mr. Layard to send a man-of-war to Cyprus	141
223	Sir J. Drummond-Hay	39	31,	Observations respecting the Turkish mission to Morocco	141
224	Lord A. Loftus ..	287	31,	Conversation with Prince Gortchakow on his departure for the head-quarters of the Russian army	143
225	" " ..	289	June 3,	Departure of the Emperor of Russia, accompanied by the Cesarevitch and the Grand Duke Serge	144
226	" " ..	292	4,	First meeting of the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society. Speeches by M. Aksakoff ..	144
227	Mr. Macdonell ..	232 Confidential	7,	Count Schouvaloff passed through Berlin yesterday on his way to London	147
228	" " ..	234 Confidential	9,	Herr von Bulow's opinion of the Russian answer	148
229	Sir A. Buchanan ..	492	8,	The Government do not intend to prosecute Dr. Reiger for his address to the Slav Committee at Moscow	148
230	Mr. Layard ..	156 Telegraphic	10,	Navigation of the Danube. Restrictive measures only provisional and temporary..	148
231	Consul Reade ..	Telegraphic	10,	Atrocities by Circassians along the Danube ..	149
232	Vice-Consul Stokes ..	Telegraphic	10,	Repulse of Russian torpedo attack	149
233	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	10,	Occupation of Kizil Arvat and Bowmeh by Russians	149
234	Mr. Layard ..	157 Telegraphic	10,	Telegram from Vice-Consul Stokes. Same as No. 232	149
235	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	10,	Proposed new route to Teheran	149
236	Mr. Layard ..	159 Telegraphic	11,	Turkish authorities believe that the Russians will very soon attempt to cross the Danube near Nicopolis and Turtukan	149
237	Lord Lyons ..	Telegraphic	11,	Duc Decazes states that Russian ships of war at Brest are about to sail for Cronstadt ..	150
238	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	11,	Coal for Port Said. Prince Gortchakow considers that a certificate should be required	150
239	To Mr. Layard and Lord A. Loftus	Telegraphic	11,	To inquire whether assistance will be accepted from the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War	150
240	To Lord A. Loftus ..	225 Confidential	11,	Possible conditions of peace. Further conversation with Count Schouvaloff	150
241	Consul Holmes ..	51	May 30,	Mr. Freeman has returned from his investigation into the impalements	151
242	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield..	113	June 5,	Policy of Roumania	151
243	" " ..	115	5,	State of siege at Bucharest. The measure is probably aimed at the Polish inhabitants	152
244	Mr. Wood	21	5,	A Circular Firman has been read in public declaring that the object of Russia is to destroy Islamism..	152
245	" "	22	5,	Tunisian Government has not been threatened with reprisals by Turkey	153
246	Consul-General White	Telegraphic	11,	Prince Milan intends going to meet the Emperor of Russia at Bucharest	153
247	Mr. Layard ..	160 Telegraphic Secret	11,	Telegram from Colonel Lennox asking for instructions as to what he and the Engineer officers are to do in the event of sieges ..	153
248	" " ..	161 Telegraphic Very Conf.	11,	Saffvet Pasha has been sounded by Austrian Ambassador as to whether Austrian mediation would be accepted by Turkey ..	154
249	" " ..	162 Telegraphic	11,	Olti has been abandoned by the Russians and reoccupied by the Turks	154
250	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	11,	The Turks are about to force their way to Nichsich..	154
251	Vice-Consul Brown ..	Telegraphic	11,	Torpedoes placed opposite Hirsova .. .	154
252	Lieut. Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	12,	Colonel Wellesley has arrived at Bucharest ..	155
253	" " ..	Telegraphic	12,	Passage of the Danube will probably be attempted on the 25th	155
254	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	12,	As to the Danube Commission being forced to fly the Ottoman flag	155
255	To Consul-General White	Telegraphic	12,	To send Captain Heneage to Bucharest for despatches	155

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
256	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic Most Conf.	June 12, 1877	Terms which Russia would accept if peace is made before crossing the Balkans. Asks opinion	155
257	Mr. Layard ..	163 Telegraphic	12,	Turkish Government will be glad to receive the aid of the National Society for Sick and Wounded in War	156
258	To Mr. Layard ..	194	12,	Danube navigation. Approves his support to Count Zichy's representations	156
259	Vice-Consul Jago ..	11	May 26,	Report on the state of affairs at Damascus ..	157
260	Consul-General Eldridge	39	29,	Report on the recent agitation in Mount Lebanon	158
261	" " ..	40	30,	Report on disturbances and excitement in the districts of Gebelé, Tripoli, and Sidon ..	158
262	" " ..	41	30,	Recent outrages committed by the Ansayrieh mountaineers in the district of Markab ..	160
263	" " ..	42	30,	Disorders in the district of Gebelé	162
264	Consul Kirby Green .	51	June 2,	Turkish troops from Podgoritza have marched into Montenegrin territory	163
265	Lord Lyons . ..	485	11,	Russian ships of war. Extends No. 237 ..	163
266	" " . ..	487 Very Conf.	12,	Displeasure of Prince of Servia at Roumanian declaration of independence	164
267	" " . ..	488	12,	Roumanian declaration of independence. Despatch from M. Cogalniceano to M. Callimachi Catargi	164
268	" " . ..	489	12,	State of siege at Constantinople. Duc Decazes will look into the matter	167
269	To Mr. Sandwith ..	4	13,	Approves advice to Governor of Crete respecting the imprisonment of certain dyers ..	167
270	Consul Zohrab ..	43	May 17,	Disorderly conduct of Circassians	167
271	" " ..	45	22,	Departure of the Circassians from Erzeroum ..	168
272	Vice-Consul Biliotti ..	26	29,	Forty Polish volunteers have passed through Trebizond to join the Turkish army ..	168
273	Mr. Layard ..	557 Confidential	31,	Secret Agent from Porte to Morocco. Safvet Pasha denies any foundation for report of ..	169
274	" " ..	560	June 1,	Despatch from Vice-Consul Dupuis respecting increased taxation and war contributions in prospect	170
275	" " ..	561 Very Conf.	1,	Conversation of Sultan with German Ambassador, in which His Majesty threw the whole responsibility of the war on Russia ..	171
276	" " ..	562 Confidential	1,	Sultan struck by Austrian Ambassador remarking that military matters much occupied the Emperor of Austria now ..	171
277	" " ..	563 Confidential	1,	Protestants in Bulgaria. Grand Vizier sees the importance of conciliating ..	171
278	" " ..	566	2,	Danube navigation. Has sent in note similar to Austrian instructions, of which he sends copy	172
279	" " ..	567	2,	Excellent working of the Turkish Parliament	174
280	" " .	569	3,	Capture of thirteen brigands who landed near Dide Agatch. (See his despatch No. 530) .	176
281	" " ..	571 Very Conf.	4,	Letters respecting proceedings of Poles in Turkey	176
282	" " ..	578	6,	List of Bulgarians in prison at Adrianople ..	180
283	" " ..	579	6,	Operations on Danube. Report from Colonel Lennox	180
284	" " ..	580	6,	State and position of Turkish army in Asia. Report from Sir A. Kemball	182
285	" " ..	581 Confidential	6,	Excited tone of Grand Vizier as to the unjust treatment of Turkey by the Great Powers ..	184
286	" " ..	582	6,	Greek brigands escaped from Janina. (See his despatch No. 515.) Stringent orders sent to Governor-General	185
287	" " ..	583 Confidential	6,	Remarks by General Dickson on Reports of Colonel Lennox and Sir A. Kemball ..	186
288	Mr. Stanley ..	28	8,	Extract of despatch from Vice-Consul Webster..	187
289	Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff (communicated June 14)	..	..	Division of Bulgaria into two provinces impracticable	189
290	Mr. Layard ..	164 Telegraphic Most Conf.	13,	Terms suggested by Russian Ambassador would never be agreed to by Porte	189
291	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic Confidential	13,	Extraordinary reception of Colonel Wellesley by Grand Duke Nicholas	189
292	Mr. Layard ..	165 Telegraphic	14,	War news from Sir A. Kemball	189

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
293	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	June 14, 1877	Russia's terms of peace. Nothing should be said to Porte respecting	190
294	" " ..	Telegraphic	14,	Respecting impossibility of dividing Bulgaria .	190
295	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Confidential Telegraphic	14,	Serious damage to Russian bridging preparations at mouth of Aluta by Turkish batteries	190
296	Consul-General White	Telegraphic	14,	Prince Milan and Foreign Minister left on their visit to Bucharest and Ploiesti ..	190
297	To Mr. Layard ..	190	14,	Escape of Greek brigands from Janina. Approve his proceedings reported in his despatch No. 515	190
298	" " ..	195	14,	Approves advice to Porte in his despatch No. 535	191
299	" " ..	Confidential 197 Confidential	14,	Turkey and Persia. Approves his efforts for amicable settlement as reported in his No. 514	191
300	" " ..	201 A Most Conf.	14,	Extends No. 294	191
301	To Lord A. Loftus ..	246 Confidential	14,	Division of Bulgaria impracticable. Communication by Count Schouvaloff	192
302	Consul Ricketts ..	90	5,	Movements of troops and state of country ..	192
303	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	14,	Revictualling of Nichsich not confirmed. Montenegrin defeat at Kristach	192
304	Mr. Layard ..	166 Telegraphic	14,	Possibility of defending Erzeroum. Report from Sir A. Kemball	193
305	" " ..	167 Telegraphic Most Conf.	15,	Russian terms of peace. Will not mention to Porte	193
306	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic Confidential	15,	Typhus among Russian troops	193
307	To Mr. Layard ..	204	15,	Protestants in Turkey. Approves language reported in No. 277	193
308	" " ..	205	15,	Danube navigation. Proceedings reported in No. 278 are approved	193
309	To Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield	38	15,	Reckless way Turks are laying torpedoes in Danube. (See his No. 103.) Porte says positions are carefully marked	194
310	To Consul Sandwith ..	5	15,	Outrage by Turkish soldiers. Approves his instructions reported in his No. 27 ..	194
311	" " ..	6	15,	Approves language to Christian Deputies reported in his No. 25	194
312	To Consul Zohrab ..	6	15,	Conduct of Circassians. Approves steps reported in his No. 43	194
313	To Consul Reade ..	4	15,	Outrages near Rustchuck. Approves proceedings reported in his No. 7	195
314	Consul Skene ..	15	May 26,	Enrolment of volunteers and state of public feeling. Despatch to Constantinople ..	195
315	" " ..	15	29,	Murder of the Cavass. Applying for inquiry into. Despatch to Constantinople ..	196
316	Consul Sandwith ..	Consular 29	June 2,	Respecting acts of sacrilege in a Christian church by Turkish soldiers	197
317	" " ..	30	4,	Meeting of Chiefs to concert about a rising ..	197
318	Lord Lyons ..	Confidential 501 Very Conf.	15,	Assurances to Duc Decazes by German Ambassador that Germany would not aggrandize herself at expense of Austria-Hungary	198
319	Mr. Layard ..	169 Telegraphic	16,	Russian assurances respecting Servia communicated to the Porte by Austrian Ambassador	199
320	" " ..	170 Telegraphic	16,	Respecting Danube Commission not flying Turkish flag	199
321	To Mr. Layard ..	203	16,	Stoppage of telegrams by Odessa line. Copy of No. 33. To communicate informally to Porte and ascertain respecting	199
322	Mr. Vivian ..	169	8,	Egyptian contingent will start from Alexandria early next week. (See his No. 154) ..	199
323	Mr. Stuart.. ..	114	9,	Conversation with M. Tricoupi. He wants to know what support Her Majesty's Government would give to Hellenic interests ..	200
324	Lord A. Loftus ..	306	12,	Reasons for Russian stoppage of Danube navigation. (See Foreign Office despatch No. 199.) Correction by M. de Giers ..	201
325	" " ..	307	11,	Opinions of press on probable results of the war..	202
326	Consul Ricketts ..	Telegraphic	16,	Russian losses near Kars and Soukoum Kalé ..	202

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
327	Consul Ricketts ..	Telegraphic	June 16, 1877	Respecting Turks detained by Russians. Porte to say where they should be met.. ..	202
328	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	16,	Telegrams in cypher for Her Majesty's Government again refused	203
329	Mr. Layard ..	171 Telegraphic	16,	Russian proclamation to Bulgarians.. ..	203
330	" " ..	172 Telegraphic	17,	Greek Agent sent to meet Czar in Roumania. It is reported so	203
331	" " ..	173 Telegraphic	17,	Haidar Bey goes to Tehran as Turkish Ambassador	203
332	" " ..	174 Telegraphic	17,	Egyptian contingent passed through Bosphorus for Varna	203
333	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	17,	Mr. St. John reports that 3,000 horses with provisions have entered Nichsich.. ..	203
334	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	17,	Nichsich relieved. Danger of Montenegro. In case of Consular intervention should he take any action?	204
335	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic Confidential	17,	Bridge across Danube at Ibraila. Passage will be probably at Flaminda-Zimnitza ..	204
336	Mr. Plunkett ..	165	5,	Russian men-of-war in American waters ..	204
337	Acting Consul Freeman	53	6,	Alleged impalement at Doberlin. Report on .	205
338	" " ..	54	6,	Expedition against insurgents ended in Bosnia with on results	210
339	" " ..	55	7,	Turkish successes against Montenegrins ..	210
340	Consul-General White	72	13,	Visit of Prince Milan to the Czar announced by M. Ristich	211
341	Sir A. Buchanan ..	499	9,	Turks reported to have carried position at entrance of Duga Pass	211
342	" " ..	502	11,	Turks at Kristnch on their way to Nichsich ..	211
343	Mr. Macdonell ..	249	16,	Reassuring reports from the Syrian coast. (See Foreign Office No. 15)	212
344	" " ..	250	16,	Stoppage of telegrams by Odessa line. (Foreign Office No. 214.) M. de Bülow agrees with views of Her Majesty's Government ..	212
345	" " ..	251	16,	Respecting state of siege in Constantinople. (Foreign Office No. 211.) Thanks of German Government for communications respecting	212
346	" " ..	253	16,	Arrangements by Russia for a loan	212
347	" " ..	254	16,	Germany will issue no official proclamation of neutrality	213
348	" " ..	255 Confidential	16,	It is supposed that with regard to the Russian reply to Lord Derby's note, the course adopted meets with the approval and concurrence of Germany	213
349	Porte to Musurus Pasha	Telegraphic	17,	View taken by Porte of Prince Milan's visit to the Czar	213
350	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic Confidential	18,	Movements of 13th and 4th army corps ..	214
351	Mr. Layard ..	175 Telegraphic	18,	Porte will not notice Prince Milan's visit to the Czar	214
352	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	18,	Navigation of Danube. Coals for Roumania as contraband of war accepted by Austria ..	214
353	Consul Sanderson ..	Telegraphic	18,	Bridge preparations on both sides of river at Ibraila	214
354	To Consul Kirby Green	Telegraphic	18,	Her Majesty's Government do not authorize intervention for suspension of hostilities at present. (See No. 334)..	214
355	To Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	18,	Coal for Egyptian ports. Respecting protection against seizure as contraband on production of certificates from Russian Consuls in England	215
356	To Colonel Siborne ..	Telegraphic	18,	Danube Commission flag. Decision of Porte respecting	215
357	To Lord A. Loftus ..	250 Most Conf.	18,	Russian terms of peace. Conversation with Count Schouvaloff. Agreed that he should not ask for an official reply to his communication	215
358	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield.	130	13,	Various incursions of Turkish soldiers and brigands along the line of the Danube. Note from the Foreign Minister respecting .	216
359	" " ..	131	13,	Roumanian Government has notified that martial law will be applied to the Principalities	218
360	" " ..	132	13,	Roumanians may invade Turkey independently	218
361	Mr. Wood.. ..	24	12,	French influence used to prevent Tunis from assisting the Porte	219

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
362	Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan	55	June 14, 1877	Navigation of Danube. Turks only exercise right of search	219
363	" " ..	56	15,	Roumania cannot be allowed to be united with Bulgaria	220
364	Admiralty	Confidential ..	18,	Hobart Pasha removed from Navy List ..	220
365	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	18,	Turks trying to effect junction of forces from Nichsich and Spuz	220
366	Mr. Layard .	176 Telegraphic	18,	Suleiman Pasha has revictualled Nichsich ..	220
367	" " ..	177 Telegraphic	18,	Austrian note to the Porte. Ready to defend her rights in the Danube	220
368	" " ..	178 Telegraphic	19,	Mission to Cabul. Has given hints respecting. It should be shown attention at Bombay..	221
369	Consul Kirby Green..	Secret Telegraphic	19,	Suleiman Pasha has reached Gradac . ..	221
370	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	19,	What note does he refer to in No. 367 ? ..	221
371	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	19,	A Russian force will cross near Oltenitza ..	222
372	To Mr. Layard ..	Confidential 209	19,	Approves his steps with regard to Abbas Mirza	222
373	Colonel Wellesley ..	..	12,	Details of his reception by the Grand Duke ..	222
374	Lord Lyons ..	507	18,	State of siege at Constantinople. French will act with Her Majesty's Government ..	223
375	Mr. St. John ..	Telegraphic	20,	Condition of Montenegro desperate.. ..	224
376	Mr. Layard ..	179 Telegraphic	20,	Answer to No. 370	224
377	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	20,	No occasion to sanction appointment of Turkish Consul at Peshawur	224
378	" " ..	Telegraphic	20,	Not to encourage mission to Cabul	225
379	" " ..	Telegraphic	20,	To urge Porte to inquire into murder of cavass at Aleppo	225
380	Vice-Consul Freeman.	Telegraphic	20,	Turks have entered Montenegro	225
381	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	20,	Austrian Government state that Turks have suffered severe losses on Montenegrin frontier..	225
382	To Colonel Nixon ..	Telegraphic	20,	He may retain his post for two years ..	225
383	To Count Schouvaloff .	..	20,	Colonel Wellesley's reception by the Grand Duke	225
384	To Sir A. Buchanan..	220	20,	Austrian explanation to Porte about transport of munitions of war	226
385	Mr. Vivian	176	12,	Departure of Egyptian force under Prince Hassan	226
386	" "	180	14,	Religious feeling in Egypt	227
387	Consul Sanderson ..	56	14,	Subscription in aid of insurrection in Crete ..	227
388	Sir A. Paget ..	248	16,	State of siege at Constantinople. Italian views	227
389	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield .	Telegraphic	19,	Colonel Wellesley anxious for instructions ..	228
390	Consul Ricketts ..	Confidential Telegraphic	20,	Paleologues, &c. To ask Porte where they should be sent	229
391	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	20,	Russians have invited people of Karee Kala and Nokohr to declare allegiance to the Czar	229
392	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	20,	Coal for neutral firms. Russian Government assent to proposal that their Consuls should grant certificates	229
393	Mr. Layard ..	180 Telegraphic	20,	Porte says Austria has a secret understanding with Russia, and that preparations are made for crossing at Gladova	229
394	" " ..	181 Telegraphic	21,	Has told Porte that Turkish Consul should not be appointed at Peshawur	230
395	" " ..	182 Telegraphic	21,	Mission to Cabul cannot be stopped now ..	230
396	Mr. Macdonell ..	Telegraphic Confidential	21,	Turkish Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin appointed Minister at Tehran	230
397	Mr. Stuart ..	Telegraphic	21,	No foundation for report of Greek Agent being sent to meet the Czar	230
398	To Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield	Telegraphic	21,	Substance of No. 383. Count Schouvaloff hopes to get things settled	230
399	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	21,	Paleologues, &c. Where should they be sent?	231
400	To Count Beust ..	Telegraphic	21,	Blockade of Black Sea ports. No proof that it is not effective	231
401	Colonel Lennox ..	85	5,	Account of Turkish army in Europe ..	231
402	Vice-Consul Biliotti ..	28	6,	Passage of Circassians through Trebizond ..	234
403	Consul Sandwith ..	31	7,	Steps taken to induce Cretan Christians to send deputy to Turkish Parliament ..	235

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
404	Consul Sandwith ..	33	June 10, 1877	Christians in Crete	237
405	Consul Blunt ..	18	8,	Vali of Adrianople's visit to Constantinople ..	238
406	Mr. Layard ..	585	8,	Outrages in Dobrudja. Return of Bulgarian deputy appointed to inquire	238
407	" " ..	587	9,	Details respecting above	239
408	" " ..	Confidential 588	9,	Influence of Turkish press on Mussulmans abroad	239
409	" " ..	589	9,	Torpedoes in the Danube. Conversation of M. Marinovitch with Raouf Pasha ..	240
410	" " ..	590	9,	Turks propose to send a mission to Cabul ..	241
411	" " ..	Secret 592	9,	Regulations for transmission of telegrams ..	242
412	" " ..	Most Conf. 593	10,	Danube Navigation. Porte's reply.. ..	242
413	" " ..	594	10,	Ditto. Porte's reply respecting interruption of	243
414	" " ..	595	10,	Yovantzo Effendi on state of Bulgaria. His report and consequent dismissal	244
415	" " ..	596	11,	State of Dobrudja. Porte promises to send 400 police there	245
416	" " ..	597	11,	Attempts to rouse Mahommedans in India and elsewhere against Russia	246
417	" " ..	Confidential 598	11,	Turkey and Greece. If Russians gain great advantages Greeks cannot be restrained ..	248
418	" " ..	Confidential 599	11,	Peace proposals. Prince Reuss and Safvet Pasha respecting	248
419	" " ..	Very Conf. 601	12,	Greek Patriarch received by the Sultan ..	249
420	" " ..	602	12,	Yovantzo Effendi, &c. Safvet Pasha's views, explanations, and promises	249
421	" " ..	Very Conf. 606	13,	Consul Blunt respecting Bulgarian amnesty ..	250
422	" " ..	607	13,	Military forces in province of Bagdad ..	252
423	" " ..	609	13,	State of feeling in district of Philippopoli .	253
424	" " ..	610	13,	Cypher telegrams from Asia not allowed ..	254
425	" " ..	611	13,	War in Asia. Sir C. Dickson's comments on military reports	255
426	" " ..	612	13,	Russian terms of peace. Could not submit them to the Porte	259
427	Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan	Most Conf. 57	16,	M. Tisza's reply to interpellation of M. Iranzi .	260
428	Mr. Stuart.. ..	112	9,	Greece and Turkey. Substance of assurances conveyed to Mr. Layard	261
430	" "	115	14,	The Hellenic question. Remarks on Boundary question	262
431	" "	Confidentinl 116	14,	Rumour of mission of Garibaldi's son to Greece	262
432	Acting-Consul Joly ..	Most Conf. 5	15,	Murderous outrage in district of Balu Kesser, Vilayet of Broussa	263
433	Mr. Stuart.. ..	Telegraphic	21,	M. Tricoupi denies that a Greek Agent has been sent to meet Emperor of Russia ..	264
434	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield..	Telegraphic	21,	Military report from Colonel Wellesley ..	264
435	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	21,	Defeat of Turkish force from Spuz	265
436	Mr. Layard ..	183 Telegraphic	21,	Turkish mission to Afghanistan. Viceroy urges immediate dispatch of Envoy ..	265
437	" " ..	184 Telegraphic	21,	Kemball's cypher telegrams refused. Turkish right wing defeated	265
438	" " ..	185 Telegraphic	21,	Two small Turkish vessels said to have been blown up by Russian war-steamer in Black Sea	265
439	" " ..	186 Telegraphic	21,	Porte maintain that their blockade of Russian Black sea is efficient	265
440	" " ..	187 Telegraphic	21,	Substance of Porte's answer respecting Suez Canal	266
441	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	22,	Movements of Spuz force	266
442	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	22,	Doubts rumour respecting passage of Russians through Servia	266
443	Consul Sanderson ..	Telegraphic	22,	Passage of Danube near Galatz by Russians ..	266
444	Sir C. Wyke ..	Telegraphic	22,	Russian men-of-war in Baltic	266
445	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	22,	Ukase for new Russian Internal Loan published	267
446	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic Confidential	22,	Baron Orczy does not believe that the Russians can intend to cross the Danube at Gladovitz.	267
447	Consul Sanderson ..	Telegraphic	22,	Russians have occupied hills opposite Galatz..	267
448	Consul Zorab ..	47	May 27,	Dissatisfaction of Mussulmans of Erzeroum at apathy of the authorities	267
449	Consul Blunt ..	19	June 11,	Increase of disorders in the Vilayet of Adrianople not to be attributed to fanatical motives	268

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
450	Consul Blunt ..	20	June 11, 1877	Greek prayer for the success of the Sultan's arms, and Encyclical letters addressed by the Patriarch to the clergy	270
451	Acting-Consul Barker.	43	14,	Affairs at Salonica	273
452	Mr. Layard ..	614 Confidential	16,	Branch of Panslavist Committee formed at Venice	274
453	„ „ ..	616	14,	Outrages at Monastir, &c. Has made representations	274
454	„ „ ..	188 Telegraphic	22,	Austrian Government has informed Porte that assurances received as to attitude of Servia are satisfactory	275
455	„ „ ..	189 Telegraphic	22,	Navigation of the Danube. Austrian note nearly the same as that communicated to Lord Derby	275
456	„ „ ..	190 Telegraphic	22,	May Turkish Envoy to Affghanistan pass through India?	275
457	„ „ ..	191 Telegraphic	23,	Persian Koords seek indiscriminate plunder. Telegram from Mr. Thomson	276
458	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	23,	Conditions of peace were merely sent for observations, not for communication ..	276
459	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	23,	Turkish mission to Affghanistan will simply receive ordinary civilities. Observations ..	276
460	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	23,	Austrian Government do not believe that Russian troops will pass through Servia ..	276
461	„ „ ..	Confidential Telegraphic	23,	Montenegro. Turks are advancing from Nichsich	277
462	To Mr. Layard ..	231	23,	Circular to Consuls as to nature of outrages they are to investigate	277
463	„ „ ..	233 Confidential	23,	Conditions of peace. Extends No. 458 ..	277
464	Vice-Consul Brown ..	Telegraphic	23,	Russians have taken Matchin	278
465	Mr. Layard ..	192 Telegraphic	23,	Russians have crossed the Danube in the Dobrudja. Turkish successes in Asia ..	278
466	Mr. White.. ..	Telegraphic	23,	Russian troops not likely to cross into Servia .	278
467	Vice-Consul Brown ..	Telegraphic	32,	Russians have crossed from Galatz	278
468	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield	Telegraphic	23,	Russians have crossed at Ibraila	278
469	Mr. Stuart,. ..	117	16,	M. Deonidas Bulgaris has given up the arms to the Hellenic Government	279
470	Consul Kirby Green ..	Telegraphic	23,	Junction of the forces of Sulieman Pasha and Ali Said Pasha	279
471	Mr. White.. ..	Telegraphic	24,	Prince of Servia has returned from Roumania .	279
472	Consul Moore ..	11	9,	State of affairs at Jerusalem	279
473	Sir J. Drummond Hay	43	13,	Turkish mission to Morocco. Report of reception of Senoosy is untrue	280
474	„ „ ..	45 Confidential	18,	Has advised the Sultan of Morocco to receive the Sultan of Turkey's letter	280
475	Lord A. Loftus ..	329 Most Conf.	20,	Insidious character of the Russian assurances, and the proposed terms of peace . ..	281
476	„ „ ..	330 Very Conf.	20,	Advisability of England occupying Constantinople and the Dardanelles	282
477	Mr. Macdonell ..	263	23,	German Government deny that Prince Reuss injured Mr. Layard's relations with the Porte	283
478	„ „ ..	269 Confidential	23,	Disappointment in Germany at the dilatoriness of the Russian military movements ..	283
479	Mr. Taylour Thomson	Telegraphic	24,	Karee Kala. Evasive assurances of Russian Minister to the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs	284
480	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	24,	Valley of the Upper Attrek. Persia would protest if Her Majesty's Government would give moral support at St. Petersburgh ..	284
481	Consul Reade ..	Telegraphic	24,	Bombardment of Rustchuk. Destruction of British Consulate	284
482	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	25,	Small force of Russians have crossed Danube at Galatz	285
483	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield..	Telegraphic	25,	Two fresh army corps are entering Roumania. Giurgevo has been severely injured by the Turks	285
484	To Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield	Telegraphic	25,	Prince Gortchakoff will receive Colonel Wellesley at Bucharest	285
485	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	25,	Sulieman Pasha is reported to have effected a junction with Said Pasha	285
485*	To Sir A. Buchanan..	222	25,	Navigation of the Danube. Forwards correspondence	285
486	Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha	Telegraphic	24,	Russian atrocities in Asia	286
487	Mr. Layard ..	193 Telegraphic	25,	The Koords have taken to plundering indiscriminately	286

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
488	Mr. Layard ..	195 Telegraphic	June 25, 1877	Turkish successes near Batoum	286
489	„ „ ..	196 Telegraphic	25,	Navigation of the Danube. Substance of the Porte's reply to the Austrian note ..	286
490	„ „ ..	198 Telegraphic	26,	Inquiry will be held into the murder of the British cavass at Aleppo	287
491	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield	Telegraphic	26,	Russian head-quarters removed to Alexandria .	287
492	To Lord Lyons ..	Telegraphic	26,	Bombardment of Rustchuk. What steps do French Government propose to take? ..	287
493	To Consul Sandwith..	7	26,	Approves advice to Cretan Christian Deputies as to electing a member for the Turkish Parliament	287
494	Consul-General Eldridge	44	12,	State of affairs in the districts of Tripoli, Gebelh, and Lattakia	288
495	„ „ ..	45	12,	State of affairs at Tarsus and Adana . ..	290
496	„ „ ..	46	12,	Fanatical display at Acre, and enrolment of Bashi-Bazouks for the war	290
497	„ „ ..	48	14,	State of affairs in the southern part of Mount Lebanon	292
498	Consul Kirby Green..	61	14,	As to the appointment of a Consular Agent at Avlona	293
499	„ „ ..	64	17,	Montenegrins will probably soon be obliged to sue for peace	293
500	Mr. Layard. ..	199 Telegraphic	26,	Notice as to anchoring in the Dardanelles, the Black Sea, the harbour of Smyrna, and the Bay of Suda	294
501	„ „ ..	200 Telegraphic	26,	A pass appears to have been given to a ship belonging to Valiano and Co., to go to, and return from, a Russian port in the Black Sea	295
502	„ „ ..	201 Telegraphic	26,	Protest of Porte against destruction of three Turkish merchantmen near Heraeli ..	295
503	„ „ ..	202 Telegraphic	27,	Considerable Turkish success near Delibaba ..	295
504	Lieut.-Col. Mansfield.	Telegraphic	27,	Russians have crossed Danube in very large number at Zimnitza. Russian head-quarters now in Bulgaria	295
505	Consul Kirby Green..	Telegraphic	27,	Recent Turkish losses in Montenegro must have been very heavy	296
506	Lord Lyons ..	Telegraphic	27,	Bombardment of Rustchuk. Duc Decazes has requested that care should be taken by the Russians not to fire at the Consulates ..	296
507	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	27,	Is a fresh application, respecting proposed Admiralty certificate for coal, necessary? ..	296
508	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	27,	To ask Porte to allow Consul Skene to be present at the Aleppo inquiry	296
509	„ „ ..	240	27,	Outrages at Monastir, &c. Approves representations	296
510	„ „ ..	241	27,	Depredations of the Circassians in the Dobrudschu. Approves representations.. ..	297
511	„ „ ..	242	27,	Turkey and Greece. Approves advice to Turkish Ministers	297
512	Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha ..	Telegraphic	26,	Russian outrage on three Turkish merchantmen..	297
513	To Mr. Taylour Thomson	43	27,	Persia and Turkey. Approves language to Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs ..	298
514	Memorandum ..	..	27,	Proposals stated to have been made in 1868 for the union of Crete with Great Britain ..	298
515	Consul Zohrab ..	53	10,	Depredations of the Koords	301
516	Consul Reade ..	8	13,	Outrages by Circassians. Proposal that the Circassians should be put under the command of Dilaver Pasha..	301
517	Mr. Layard ..	621 Confidential	16,	Interview with Karatheodori Effendi as to the flag to be used by the Danube Commission..	303
518	„ „ ..	622	16,	State of siege at Constantinople. Copy of *note-verbale* addressed to the Porte ..	303
519	„ „ ..	623	16,	New Governor of Damascus	304
520	„ „ ..	624	16,	The Sultan has not proclaimed a religious war against the Christians	304
521	„ „ ..	625	17,	Defences of the Dardanelles	304
522	„ „ ..	626	17,	Circassian outrages. Copy of Memorandum addressed to the Porte	306
523	„ „ ..	627	18,	Relations between the Porte and Tunis are cordial	307
524	„ „ ..	628 Confidential	18,	Important letter from Vienna on the general state of affairs	307
525	„ „ ..	631 Most Conf.	19,	Conditions of peace proposed by Russia. Further observations	310

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
526	Mr. Layard ..	632 Confidential	June 19, 1877	Interviews with dignitaries of the Greek Church and Greek inhabitants of Constantinople ..	313
527	„ „ ..	633	19,	Navigation of the Danube. The Porte considers the Austrian note to be of a very disagreeable nature	315
528	„ „ ..	636 Confidential	19,	Is informed that Greeks of bad character are being sent to commit outrages on the Turkish frontier	315
529	„ „ ..	637	19,	Inflammatory proclamation circulated in Bulgaria	315
530	„ „ ..	638	19,	Russian torpedo-attack off Sulina	316
531	„ „ ..	640	19,	Outrage at Banjaluka. Result of Porte's inquiry	317
532	„ „ ..	641	20,	Affairs in Epirus.	318
533	„ „ ..	642	20,	State of affairs at Sulina	319
534	„ „ ..	643	20,	Turkish Parliament. Remarks on first session	320
535	„ „ ..	644 Confidential	20,	Peace proposals. Thinks Germany is preparing to mediate	320
536	„ „ ..	645	20.	Bulgarian amnesty. Consul Blunt's classification of prisoners	321
537	„ „ ..	646	20,	Russian atrocities in Asia..	322
538	Lord Lyons . ..	549	27,	Foreign Consulates at Rustchuk	323
539	„ „ ..	550	27,	Turkish torpedoes. Conversation with Duc Decazes	323
540	„ „ ..	551	27,	Russian fleet will not go to Mediterranean	324
541	Mr. Stuart , ..	Telegraphic	27,	Turkish arms at Corfu. Difficulty between Greece and the Porte respecting . ..	324
542	Colonel Mansfield ..	Telegraphic Confidential	27,	Satisfactory interview with Prince Gortchakow	324
543	Mr. Layard	203	28,	Montenegrins have mutilated Turkish prisoners	325
544	„ „ ..	Telegraphic 204	28,	Official notification to vessels approaching Crete	325
545	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	28,	50,000 Russians have crossed at Simnitza ..	325
546	Colonel Mansfield ..	Telegraphic	28,	Russians have crossed at Hirsova	325
547	To Consul Reade ..	Telegraphic	28,	To remain at Rustchuk, unless other Consuls leave	325
548	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	28,	Turkish arms at Corfu. What are views of the Porte?	326
549	„ „ ..	247	28,	Bulgarian amnesty. To urge Porte to carry out	326
550	„ „ ..	257	28,	Yovantzo Effendi. Approves proceedings respecting	326
551	To Lord A. Loftus ..	269	28,	Foreign Consulates at Rustchuk. Count Schouvaloff will inquire into bombardment of	326
552	Mr. Layard . ..	206 Telegraphic	28,	Turks will not defend Kustendji lines. Great outrages are being perpetrated	327
553	„ „ ..	207 Telegraphic	28,	Turkish cases detained at Corfu contained clothes	327
554	„ „ ..	208 Telegraphic	28,	Porte never intended to send a ship to Corfu	327
555	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	28,	Steps for defense of Gallipoli .. .	328
556	Colonel Mansfield ..	Telegraphic Confidential	28,	Crossing at Simnitza. Bombardment of Rustchuk.	328
557	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic	29,	Admiralty wish vessels of Danubian Navigation Company to be protected	328
558	„ „ ..	Telegraphic	29,	Has he taken steps about infraction of Capitulations at Damascus?	328
559	To Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	29,	Coal for Her Majesty's ships. To act on No.	328
560	Consul Blunt ..	25	18,	Ahmed Aga, &c., removed to Constantinople..	328
561	„ „ ..	26	18,	Arbitrary collection of taxes at Tsarovo ..	329
562	„ „ ..	27	18,	Robberies near Philippopolis	330
563	„ „ ..	28	19,	Non-payment of stipend promised to priests of destroyed villages	330
564	„ „ ..	29	20,	Exaggerated reports of disorders near Demotica..	333
565	Consul Sandwith ..	34	12,	Reports of sacrilege and outrages in Crete ..	335
566	„ „ ..	37	18,	Christians not allowed to leave Crete ..	336
567	„ „ ..	38	19,	Christians near Rothymo refused to pay tithes .	336
568	Mr. Layard ..	655	21,	Sir C. Dickson's comments on military reports from Europe and Asia	337
569	Acting Consul Barker.	44	20,	Affairs at Salonica	339
570	Acting Consul Joly ..	6	22,	Circassian atrocities at Aivali	340

No.	Name.	No.	Date.	Subject.	Page
571	Colonel Mansfield ..	Telegraphic Confidential	June 29, 1877	Russians reported to have crossed at Oltenitza..	341
572	„ „ ..	Telegraphic Confidential	29,	Colonel Wellesley has given Prince Gortchakow a copy of No.	341
573	Mr. Layard ..	211 Telegraphic	30,	Turkish cases detained at Corfu. Affair settled	341
574	„ „ ..	212 Telegraphic	30,	Excesses in Dobrudsha were committed by marauders	341
575	„ „ ..	Telegraphic Private and Most Conf.	29,	Advance of Russians. Asks for definite instructions	341
576	To Mr. Layard ..	Telegraphic Confidential	30,	Answer to above. Fleet to go to Besika Bay. Difficulty of his position fully understood; his exertions appreciated	342
577	Sir A. Buchanan ..	Telegraphic	30,	Turkish cases detained at Corfu are to be forwarded to Trieste	342
578	Lord A. Loftus ..	Telegraphic	30,	Coal for Her Majesty's ships. No objection to Admiralty certificate. Count Schouvaloff authorized to settle questions relating to coal	342
579	To Mr. Layard ..	260 Confidential	30,	Extends No. 576. High approval of his energy, ability, and judgment	342
580	„ „ ..	262	30,	Approves his representations respecting outrages in different parts of the Turkish Empire	343
581	„ „ ..	263	30,	Bulgarian amnesty. Approval of Mr. Blunt (No. 536)	343

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Turkey.

Part XIV.

No. 1.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 448.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May* 14, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the Law passed by the Turkish Parliament, authorizing the Porte to proclaim the state of siege in Constantinople, in case of necessity.

It will be of great importance that the question whether the Porte could extend, under any circumstances whatever, the state of siege to foreigners residing in Turkey, under the protection of the Capitulations, should be decided.

I venture, therefore, to ask the opinion of your Lordship upon this subject, and such instructions as might enable me to act should the case arise.

As I have already informed your Lordship, it is not probable that the Turkish Government will have recourse to this measure except in extreme necessity, on account of the difficulties to which it might give rise between it and foreign Powers. The French Chargé d'Affaires informs me that he has reason to believe that his Government would insist upon the observance of the Capitulations, and would resist all proceedings with respect to French subjects, such as domiciliary visits, search for arms, arbitrary arrests, &c., in violation of them. Other Powers, and especially Germany, would no doubt take the same line. Thus Russians under German protection would be beyond the reach of the Turkish authority, even if Russian armies were menacing Constantinople, and it was of vital necessity for the Porte to proclaim the state of siege.

The position of the Porte is a very hard and difficult one, to which no independent nation could possibly submit.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I may remind your Lordship that through Mr. Sandison, Safvet Pasha has stated to me that in the event of the state of siege being proclaimed, the rights and privileges of foreigners would be respected.

A. H. L.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Newspaper Extract.

L'Etat de Siége.

Projet de Loi voté par le Parlement.—Les journaux de la localité ont publié la traduction du projet de loi qui vient d'être voté par la Chambre des Députés :—

"*Loi sur l'Etat de Siége* (*Idaréi Eurfié Canouni*).

"Chapitre I.—*Des circonstances déterminant la Proclamation de l'Etat de Siége.*

"Article 1. Les places de guerre et les autres localités sont soumises au régime de

l'état de siége en cas de révolte ou de guerre et en cas de constatation de faits ou d'indices de nature à faire prévoir des troubles sur un point du territoire et à porter atteinte à la sécurité extérieure et intérieure de l'Empire.

"Chapitre II.—*Du mode de Proclamation du Régime de l'Etat de Siége.*

"Art. 2. A Sa Majesté le Sultan appartient le pouvoir exclusif de proclamer, sur la décision et demande du Conseil des Ministres, l'état de siége sur un point quelconque du territoire de l'Empire.

"Art. 3. L'état de siége, soit dans les localités de la frontière, soit dans l'intérieur de l'Empire, est proclamé, après délibération avec les autorités civiles, par les commandants supérieurs des places de guerre de l'endroit, sous cette condition que le fait sera porté immédiatement à la connaissance de la Sublime Porte pour qu'elle demande la sanction de Sa Majesté le Sultan.

"Art. 4. La proclamation de l'état de siége sur un point du territoire est portée dans le plus bref délai à la connaissance du Parlement. Mais si cette proclamation a lieu en dehors de l'époque de session du Parlement, il en sera informé aussitôt qu'il sera convoqué.

"Art. 5. Les limites de la zone renfermant la ville, le district, l'arrondissement ou le vilayet proclamé en état de siége, seront minutieusement indiquées et énumérées dans l'avis de cette proclamation.

"Chapitre III.—*Du mode d'Administration des Localités soumises au Régime de l'Etat de Siége.*

"Art. 6. Dès la proclamation de l'état de siége et pendant sa durée, les dispositions de la Constitution et des autres lois civiles qui sont contraires à l'état de siége demeurent temporairement suspendus.

"Art. 7. Les autorités militaires sont chargées des attributions dont étaient investies les autorités civiles en ce qui concerne la police et l'ordre public.

"Art. 8. Les prévenus de tout délit ou crime portant atteinte à la sécurité intérieure et extérieure de l'Etat sont jugés par un conseil de guerre sans égard à la qualité et à la dignité des prévenus.

"Art. 9. Les personnes qui forment des desseins malveillants contre les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement dans l'exercice de leurs fonctions sont justiciables des conseils de guerre, si leurs actes se rapportent aux circonstances qui ont motivé la proclamation de l'état de siége.

"Art. 10. L'autorité militaire est autorisée :—

"1. A faire, de jour ou de nuit, des visites domiciliaires.

"2. A arrêter les personnes suspectes et ayant de mauvais antécédents et à éloigner celles qui n'ont pas un domicile fixe dans les localités soumises au régime de l'état de siége.

"3. A saisir les armes et les munitions de guerre entre les mains de la population.

"4. A suspendre immédiatement les journaux qui par leurs publications cherchaient à exciter les esprits.

"Art. 11. Les autorités civiles pourront, comme par le passé, exercer quelques-unes des attributions et devoirs mentionnés dans les Articles 8, 9, 10, dans le cas où, sur la demande du Ministère, elles y seront autorisées par un Iradé Impérial.

"Art. 12. Les délits et crimes ordinaires sont justiciables des Tribunaux réguliers.

"Art. 13. Les conseils de guerre ont la faculté de connaître aussi des délits et des crimes ordinaires dans un but de salut public.

"Art. 14. Les conseils de guerre sont exclusivement chargés des attributions des Tribunaux Correctionnels ordinaires. Par conséquent, ces conseils n'ont la faculté de s'immiscer dans aucune affaire du ressort des Tribunaux ordinaires des localités situées en dehors des limites du territoire proclamé en état de siége, ni même dans celles qui, sans être du ressort de ces Tribunaux, ne se produisent pas dans le territoire soumis au régime de l'état de siége; de même qu'ils ne peuvent continuer la procédure des affaires dont les Tribunaux ordinaires se seraient déjà saisis avant la proclamation de la loi martiale.

"Art. 15. Si les délits et crimes prévus par l'Article 8 de cette loi ont été commis avant la proclamation de l'état de siége et que les prévenus n'aient pas été encore jugés, ils sont justiciables des conseils de guerre.

"Art. 16. Tous les comités secrets, fussent-ils formés avant la proclamation de l'état de siége, sont justiciables des conseils de guerre.

"Art. 17. Les individus qui seraient reconnus pour avoir participé à des actes et faits qui ont motivé la proclamation de l'état de siége, sont jugés par les conseils de guerre quand même ils ne seraient pas domiciliés dans les localités soumises à ce régime.

"Art. 18. Les habitants des localités proclamées en état de siége, continuent à jouir, comme par le passé, des droits qui leur sont assurés par la Constitution et les lois civiles en tant qu'elles ne sont pas provisoirement suspendues par la loi présente.

"Chapitre IV.—*De la Suppression de l'Etat de Siége.*

"Art. 19. Sur la décision et la demande du Conseil des Ministres, un Iradé Impérial lève l'état de siége dans les localités où il n'y aura plus nécessité de maintenir ce régime.

"Art. 20. Le commandant supérieur des places de guerre et des autres localités soumises au régime de l'état de siége a la faculté de faire cesser ce régime à condition qu'il en donne immédiatement avis à la Sublime Porte et qu'il obtienne le Décret Impérial nécessaire.

"Art. 21. La levée de l'état de siége est immédiatement portée à la connaissance du Parlement. Si la suppression de ce régime a lieu lors de l'époque des vacances, le Parlement en sera informé à sa prochaine réunion.

"Art. 22. Aussitôt après la levée de l'état de siége, les conseils de guerre ne conservent plus le droit de faire des recherches pour la découverte et l'arrestation des prévenus pour délits et crimes commis durant l'état de siége. Ces sortes d'affaires redeviennent de nouveau du ressort des Tribunaux ordinaires, mais l'officier qui durant l'état de siége remplissait auprès des conseils de guerre les fonctions de Procureur-Général, aura le droit de remplir les mêmes fonctions auprès des Tribunaux ordinaires.

"Fait le 16 Rebi-ul-Akhir, 1294 ($\frac{1}{13}\frac{8}{9}$ Avril, 1877)."

No. 2.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 1.*)

(No. 470.)

Therapia, May 17, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Persian Minister called upon me to-day to read to me a telegram that he had received from his Government with reference to the relations between Turkey and Persia. The Persian Prime Minister, after directing Mohsin Khan to thank me for what I had done to bring about a good understanding between the two countries, states that, in pursuance of my advice, he withdrew the demand that a Persian Commissioner should accompany the Turkish Commissioner to inquire into the outrages alleged to have been committed upon Persian pilgrims at Medina. His Excellency relies upon an impartial inquiry being made. He adds that the pilgrims who had returned to Persia from Medina affirmed that no Persians had been killed in the affray in the mosque in that city—a statement which Mohsin Khan denied. His Excellency further instructs the Persian Minister to give me the most explicit assurances that the reports of the intention of Persia to enter upon hostilities against Turkey in Arabestan or elsewhere were entirely unfounded. The Shah and the Persian people, he says, could not forget that the Turks were Mussulmans, and that Russia was waging war against the Mahommedan religion. They could not, under such circumstances, embarrass Turkey, who was fighting for the cause of Persia herself. The Persian Prime Minister expressed his hope that the Porte will listen to the reasonable request of Persia that her subjects should be treated, under the most-favoured-nation clause of her Treaty with Turkey, on the same footing with the subjects of other nations.

Mohsin Khan informed me that when the Porte persisted in claiming the islet recently formed, as it is alleged, on the Persian side of the river, and the Arabs of the Montifik tribe were about to take forcible possession of it, Persia was bound to uphold what she considered her rights, and she had, therefore, made the preparations near Mohammereh which had led to the representations of the Turkish Government. But he believed that the question of the right to this islet was put aside for the present, and would not lead to any misunderstanding with the Porte.

Mohsin Khan said that Her Majesty's Government had been appealed to by Persia to support her claim to the most-favoured-nation treatment for her subjects in Turkey—in fact, to enjoy the advantages of the Capitulations—and asked me whether

I had received any instructions on the subject. I told him that I had not. He further requested me to instruct Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah to endeavour to ascertain, through British Mussulman subjects at Medina, whether the inquiry into the outrages alleged to have been committed there was fairly and impartially conducted. This I promised to do, and have written accordingly to Captain Beyts.

The Turkish Commissioner leaves to-day for Medina. Mohsin Khan tells me that he has seen him, and that the choice appears to be a good one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 3.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 471.) *Therapia, May* 17, 1877.
My Lord,

AT the audience I had of the Sultan on the 15th instant, I spoke strongly to His Majesty on the subject of the outrages committed by the Circassians. His Majesty immediately sent a message on the subject to the Grand Vizier, and His Highness now informs me that Circular instructions have consequently been sent to the provincial authorities ordering them to deal severely with these people and to check their excesses without delay.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 4.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 472.) *Therapia, May* 17, 1877.
My Lord,

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram of the 14th instant, I have the honour to inform you that the Porte states that, on principle, it is bound to apply to Russian vessels passing through the Suez Canal the same measures as are applied to them in other parts of the Turkish Empire.

The draft of a communication to this effect to the Viceroy is now in course of preparation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 5.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 474. Confidential.) *Therapia, May* 19, 1877.
My Lord,

LORD LYONS has been good enough, as he informed your Lordship, to send me copies of his despatches to your Lordship Nos. 373 and 374, relating to his conversations with Khalil Sheriff Pasha.

Khalil Sheriff Pasha called upon me the day before he left Constantinople for England. He did not allude to the existence of a Secret Treaty between Sheriff Pasha (on the part of the Khedive) and M. de Lex, the Russian Consul-General; but he spoke very ill of the rule of the Viceroy, declared that he was ruining his country, and described a plan for transferring the administration of Egypt to Her Majesty's Government. As I was aware that Khalil Sheriff Pasha was very much exasperated against his uncle, because he had not received the money which the Khedive had agreed to pay him, and that he is known for talking rather wildly, I did not think it necessary to report what he said to your Lordship. I do so now because he seems to have held the same language to Lord Lyons.

I asked the Grand Vizier this morning whether he was satisfied with the conduct of the Khedive. After a little hesitation his Highness answered that on the whole he was. He said that the Porte had received information that the Russian Consul-General in Egypt, supported by the Consul-General of France, had done his utmost to

prevent the Viceroy from performing his duty to the Sultan and fulfilling his engagements, but without success.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 6.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 475. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May* 19, 1877.

THE Grand Vizier called upon me this morning to tell me that he had received trustworthy information from Servia to the effect that preparations were being actively made for the concentration of a force on the Bulgarian frontier with a view to attacking Turkey. M. Ristich and M. Cristich denied the fact, but no weight could be attached to their denial, which was absolutely contrary to the proof that had been furnished to the Turkish Government. His Highness stated that he had also been informed that Russia, notwithstanding the assurances which she had given to Austria, had come to an understanding with the Servian Government to pass across the Danube into Servian territory if she found greater difficulties than she had expected in crossing the river elsewhere. His Highness requested me to acquaint Her Majesty's Government with what he had told me, adding that he was at a loss to know what course to pursue towards Servia, whose disloyal and treacherous conduct, and contempt for Treaties, rendered it quite impossible to place confidence in any assurances that she might give. It was very hard that Europe should expect Turkey to respect the Treaty of Peace with Servia, whilst Servia was openly taking steps in violation of it.

I telegraphed what his Highness had stated to me to your Lordship. It appears to me very important that, considering the state of the relations between Turkey and Servia Mr. White should lose no time in returning to his post.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 7.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 476. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May* 19, 1877.

THE Austrian Ambassador, Count Zichy, the German Ambassador, Henry VII, Prince of Reuss, and the Italian Minister, Count Corti, arrived at Constantinople, together, on Thursday evening. They all called on me in the course of the next day.

Count Zichy stated to me that he was very anxious to act with me in my relations with the Porte, that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had the entire approval of the Austro-Hungarian Government, and that I might depend upon his friendly co-operation. He said that his instructions were to avail himself of any opportunity that might offer to endeavour to restore peace; but that he did not at present see any prospect of such an opportunity presenting itself. He criticized somewhat severely the conduct of Russia, and condemned the war as unjust and unnecessary. I told Count Zichy that I should have much pleasure in informing Her Majesty's Government of his desire to act cordially with me, and that I should do my best to maintain the most friendly relations with him. I observed that it had always been my opinion that England and Austro-Hungary had common interests in Turkey, and that the policy of our two countries with respect to this Empire ought to be guided by the same considerations.

Prince Reuss was much more reserved than Count Zichy. He seemed inclined to justify the proceedings of Russia, to place the fullest confidence in the desire of the Emperor of Russia for peace, and to throw all the blame of the war upon Turkey.

Count Corti admitted that Signor Melegari, and some other members of the present Italian Ministry, were not indisposed, personally, to seek for some territorial advantages out of events which might take place in Turkey; but he said that the Italian Government intended to maintain a strict neutrality in the war between Turkey and Russia, and the great majority of the nation was entirely opposed to a policy of adventure.

Italy had just achieved her independence and unity, she required peace to put her finances in order, and every sensible Italian was persuaded that to plunge into war would be to plunge into bankruptcy also.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 8.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 477. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 19, 1877.*

FOR some years past the Russian Government have, it is well known, been endeavouring, through General Ignatiew, and their other secret agents, to bring the provinces of Turkey in Europe entirely under Slav influence. Their attention, with this view, was turned towards the convents of Mount Athos, and by incessant intrigues and a liberal outlay of money, they have gradually succeeded in obtaining a footing on the mountain. The most important step that they have taken in this direction is to obtain the nomination of a Russian subject, Macarius, as Hegemon, or Head, of one of the monasteries, formerly named Pantalimon, but now generally called Russicon—a corruption, I am told, of Rossicon, a name derived from a benefactor to the convent. Macarius, supported by Russian intrigue and money, has gradually gained over the Greek monks in other establishments, and purchased some of their lands. It is apprehended that, little by little, the whole Peninsula will be brought under Russian and Slav influence to the exclusion of that of Greece and of the Greek Patriarchate. The belief that such will be the case has caused considerable anxiety to those Greeks who are opposed to the extension of Russian rule and influence in Turkey in Europe, and especially in Macedonia, where the agents of Macarius are said to be now actively engaged in endeavouring to propagate the Slav cause in opposition to the Greek.

Several Greeks of influence have spoken to me on the subject, pointing out how important it would be for the Porte to put a stop to the proceedings of Russia in Mount Athos, and to support Greek interests. They state that by doing so the Turkish Government would conciliate and earn the gratitude of the Greeks, who are very tenacious as to their religious establishments in Mount Athos. The convents in the Peninsula would, at the same time, no longer be a centre of Russian intrigue in Turkey in Europe.

I thought it desirable to instruct Mr. Sandison to say a word on the subject to the Grand Vizier, and to ascertain his Highness's views with respect to it. I have the honour to inclose copy of a report which he has made to me of his conversation with his Highness.

The Grand Vizier spoke to me on the matter himself to-day. He expressed his regret that a rule, or law, making it necessary that the Heads of convents should be Turkish subjects, born in Turkish territory, should not have been passed by the Porte. The Turkish Government had been prevented carrying out its intentions in this respect, he said, by the intrigues and bribery of General Ignatiew. A precedent had thus been established by the election of Macarius, which might lead to very mischievous results. It was now very difficult to remove him, but his Highness hinted that at the periodical Synod, or meeting, of the Heads of the convents of Mount Athos at Caries, the Greek Patriarch might manage that a vote should be carried condemning Macarius' conduct, and calling upon the Porte to make a law, or regulation, declaring that the Heads of the convents should be Turkish subjects. His Highness added that the person who had just been appointed by the Porte to administer the affairs of Mount Athos, a Greek gentleman who enjoys the confidence of his Government, would favour this proceeding. When a vote of this nature had been carried, the Porte might find an opportunity for interference in the case of Macarius, or, at any rate, for taking steps to prevent the further spread of Russian influence in the Peninsula.

The matter is one of considerable importance both as regards the Turks and Greeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 8.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

(Most Confidential.)
Sir, *Therapia, May 16, 1877.*

MOUNT ATHOS, which has been for many years past a hotbed of Russian intrigue, has now become also, as your Excellency observed the other day, an important centre of Panslavism, of which the Porte must be made to see the full danger, in order that it may avail itself of the present opportunity to check its progress.

Under your Excellency's instructions, I accordingly pointed out to the Grand Vizier the expediency of removing, in the first instance, Macarius from the Superiorship of the Russian Monastery, generally known as the "Russicon," and the advantage that would result to the Porte from the formation of Mount Athos into a particular Mutessarifilik, the limits of which towards the north-west should not extend beyond the narrow slip of land which connects the mountain with the Vilayet of Salonica. His Highness, having much approved of the suggestion, said that the Porte would not lose time to act upon it as affording some check to the spread of Panslavism in Macedonia and other provinces of European Turkey. These are, no doubt, exposed to all the evil influences proceeding from the Russian monks of Mount Athos, of whom there are no less than 2,500 established in the monasteries. They dispose of much money sent from Russia, which is being chiefly applied to the continual purchase of land from the Greek monks*, who, at this rate, will eventually be supplanted by their Russian brethren throughout the mountain.

The Grand Vizier does not see, however, how Macarius is to be deprived of the Superiorship of the "Russicon," since his nomination to it has received the sanction both of the Porte and of the Greek Patriarchate even (*sic*) as a Russian subject and nobleman.

About two years ago a règlement concerning the eligibility of candidates to the Superiorship of the Monasteries was elaborated at the Greek Patriarchate. During the discussion of its provisions some members of the Mixed Council of the Patriarchate insisted upon the insertion of a clause providing that no candidate shall be eligible to the Superiorship of a monastery unless he was a Turkish subject, born in Turkey of Rayah parents. An appeal having thereupon been made to the Porte, it stated in reply that by the fact of a monk under foreign nationality settling in the mountain or accepting the Superiorship of a monastery necessarily became a Turkish subject to all intents and purposes.

The question was, nevertheless, left undecided, and the Porte now proposes to insert in the règlement the clause above referred to. But it is doubtful whether it can have a retroactive effect upon the Russian monks in Mount Athos.

As to Macarius, his case was looked upon at the time as an exceptional one, and there appears to have been no question of his nomination even coming under the operation of the proposed clause of the règlement. His appointment was, therefore, duly sanctioned by the Porte and the Greek Patriarchate owing, in a great measure, to Russian pressure and to the distribution of a large sum of money, 60,000*l.*, amongst those who undertake to forward Macarius' object.

The Porte, however, is but too anxious now to avail itself of the present opportunity to rid the mountain of, at least, the most mischievous and influential Russian monks. But the Porte, it is thought, ought not to take the initiative in it ostensibly. The matter should be entrusted to the management of the Greek Patriarch, who, in presence of the prospect of re-asserting the Patriarchate's former authority over the mountain would not be at a loss to find plausible reasons for expelling the objectionable Russian monks when the mountain is formed into a special Mutessarifilik; should the Patriarch, who is justly suspected of serving Russian interests in Turkey, decline to act his Holiness could easily be deposed by his own community, with which he is far from being popular, but in order to depose the Patriarch it would first be necessary for the Porte to transfer to some distant provincial appointment a certain Costaki Effendi Anthopulo, who is now a Senator and the most influential member of the Mixed Council of the Patriarchate, without the consent of which no Patriarch can be superseded.

His Holiness, being sensible of his increasing unpopularity, found it prudent to secure in the Mixed Council the interest and influence of Costaki Effendi, who is

* Of these there are about 6,000.

equally suspected of being pro-Russian and a secret Russian Agent of considerable ability.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 9.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 1.*)

(No. 484.) *Therapia, May 21, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose, for your Lordship's information, copy of a report by Mr. Blunt of a conversation held by him with the Grand Vizier relative to the state of the district of Adrianople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 9.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, May 19, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the conversation which I have had to-day with the Grand Vizier, in pursuance with your Excellency's instructions, relative to a recent order of the Porte to dispatch the police force of the Vilayet of Adrianople to the seat of war on the Danube, and to replace it by the Mustahfiz troops, as reported in my despatches to your Excellency from Adrianople. I tried to impress upon his Highness the importance of not carrying out this order, lest the inefficiency of the Mustafiz should more or less encourage the turbulent tendencies of the Circassians, of whom there are great numbers in this vilayet, particularly in the districts of Adrianople, Slimnia, and Rodosto.

His Highness promised me that he would consult with the Minister of the Interior and endeavour to have the order, as regards Adrianople, modified, if not rescinded, adding, however, that he would meet with some difficulty on the part of Redif Pasha, the Seraskier, and Abdul Kerim Pasha, the Serdar i Ekrem, who are both anxious to secure reinforcements in cavalry, with which arm they are not at all well provided.

I also spoke to his Highness of the present satisfactory state of things in the Province of Adrianople, and mentioned the praiseworthy efforts of Ali Pasha, the Governor-General, to maintain order and tranquillity in the districts south of the Balkans. I at the same time alluded to the Circassians as forming at present the chief element of trouble in these districts, and suggested that the disposition of this people to hurry into excesses might be calmed down by the use of religious influence and advice, an expedient which could be safely and usefully tried through the Mufti of Adrianople going the round of the Circassian villages and exhorting the Chiefs to use their authority over their clans in the interests of order and tranquillity, pointing out to them that the Mahommedan faith required true believers at all times, but especially in time of war, not to molest but to protect the lives and property of their Christian neighbours.

I made this suggestion, as both the Mufti and Ali Pasha, with whom I had conversed on the subject shortly before my departure from Adrianople, appeared inclined to act upon it.

The Grand Vizier said that it was a good idea, and called his Private Secretary and told him to write to Ali Pasha a letter complimenting him on his able administration of the Vilayet of Adrianople, and directing him to carry out this suggestion.

I should add that the Sheikh ul Islam, who called on the Grand Vizier just as I was taking my departure also, on explaining to him, at his Highness' request, my recommendation, expressed his approval of it, and assured his Highness that he would not only write a letter on the subject to the Mufti of Adrianople, but would also address a general Circular in the sense of my recommendation to all the Muftis in the districts in which Circassians are located.

The Mufti of Adrianople is a just and humane man, and as he is equally respected and esteemed by Mahommedans and Christians I feel sure that he will bring all his influence to bear in the direction I have pointed out, and that some good will result from it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 10.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 1.*)

(No. 485.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May 21, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose two "fetvas" (or decrees) of the Sheikh-ul-Islam, or head of the Mahommedan religion in Turkey, published at Constantinople.

It has been remarked by some of my colleagues that the "fetva," declaring the right of the Sultan to send Mussulman soldiers against the invaders of Turkey, omits all mention of Christians, and has the appearance of an appeal to the fanaticism of the Mahommedans. I am assured, however, that the wording of the "fetva" is a mere ancient form used on such occasions, and has no religious significance.

The second "fetva," which confers upon the Sultan the title of "Ghazi," translated generally as "the victorious," has been always issued, it appears, upon the commencement of a war, and not in consequence of victories actually achieved.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 10.

Two Fetvas of Sheikh-ul-Islam, one declaring the right of the Sultan to send Mussulman soldiers against the Invaders of Turkey, and the other conferring on His Majesty the title of "Ghazy."

LE "Takvimi Vakaï" a publié hier soir en supplément deux Fetvas (Décrets du Chéik-ul-Islam) l'un déclarant juste et légale la guerre de la Turquie contre la Russie; l'autre accordant la permission à Sa Majesté le Sultan de prendre le titre de "Ghazi." Voici la traduction du premier:

"*Demande:* Si le Commandeur des croyants fait un Traité avec le Roi d'un pays déjà engagé en guerre, et que, après quelque temps, le Souverain de ce pays viole le Traité conclu et passe avec orgueil les frontières d'Islam, dans le but de poser à la nation Mahométane des propositions déshonorantes et inacceptables, le Sultan, protecteur de la vraie religion des Islams, après qu'il se sera assuré que son Etat possède la force nécessaire pour résister à l'ennemi et que la guerre peut-être favorable pour le pays, la loi de Dieu lui fait-elle un devoir d'expédier des soldats Musulmans contre l'envahisseur, en s'appuyant sur le secours du Tout-Puissant, et dans le but d'établir d'une façon éclatante la supériorité de la religion Musulmane, conformément au verset du Coran: 'Catilu-fi-sebilil illah?' (Tuez-le pour Dieu, c'est-à-dire sans aucun intérêt personnel).

"*Réponse:* Dieu seul sait, mais le 'Chér'i' répond, oui!

"Ecrit par le pauvre Hassan Hairullah. Que Dieu lui pardonne."

Voici le second Fetva qui autorise Sa Majesté le Sultan à prendre le titre de "Ghazi":—

"*Demande:* Le Khalife de toute la terre (que Dieu fasse exister son Khalifat jusqu'à la fin des siècles), Sultan Abdul Hamid dans cette guerre qui se fait conformément au Chéri, ayant équipé et expédié des troupes contre l'ennemi de la nation et de la religion, d'accord avec les paroles du Prophète: 'Men djehézé ghazian fi sébilillah fécad Ghaza' (celui qui équipe des combattants sans autre intérêt que pour Dieu, est Ghazi), est-il conforme au Chéri que Sa Majesté le Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid soit proclamé 'Ghazi' dans tous les 'mémber' (tribune dans les mosquées)?

"*Réponse:* Dieu seul sait; mais le Chéri dit, oui!

"Ecrit par le pauvre Hassan Hairullah. Que Dieu lui pardonne."

No. 11.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 486. Very Confidential.)

Therapia, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a letter written by the same person as the one forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch Very Confidential, No. 462, of the 16th instant, with reference to the policy of Austria as to the Slav Provinces of Turkey.

This letter has been placed before the Sultan, and has, I understand, much interested His Majesty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 11.

Letter from Vienna to the Polish Committee at Constantinople.

Vienne, le 10 Mai, 1877.

Mon cher Ami,

LA situation à Vienne a un peu changé depuis votre départ. Je vous la définerai en deux mots. Dans la deuxième moitié du mois passé, M. Fadieff, s'étant établi à Belgrade, y avait commencé à faire tous les préparatifs à provoquer une nouvelle révolution en Serbie. Les rapports qu'on avait ici sur son activité diraient, il est vrai, que le Prince était dûment opposé à une nouvelle levée des boucliers, que M. Ristics lui-même n'y croyait pas le moment opportun, et voulait attendre un ordre de Pétersbourg, mais que M. Fadeiff s'était mis en rapports directs avec l'Omladina, et que cette vaste conspiration qui étend ses fils jusque dans les provinces Austro-Hongroises, qui aurait même son siége principal à Neusatz, en Hongrie, était toute prête à provoquer une explosion, voir même à y entraîner les populations Slaves de l'Autriche-Hongrie. Ces rapports n'ont pas manqué d'inquiéter à Vienne, et le Cabinet Autrichien n'a pas tardé à faire pressentir à St. Pétersbourg que l'Autriche ne peut nullement admettre une nouvelle révolution en Serbie qui, dans la situation actuelle, mettrait nécessairement le repos de ses propres pays et que si la Serbie se soulève, elle devrait immédiatement occuper ce pays. Là-dessus, le Cabinet de St. Pétersbourg s'est empressé de rassurer l'Autriche en disant que la Russie ni approuve, ni protège d'aucune façon une nouvelle levée des boucliers en Serbie, et que l'Autriche peut être sûre de ce que la Russie ne fera elle-même, ni permettra d'entreprendre aucune action de nature à troubler le repos de ses sujets dans les pays limitrophes à ses frontières. Ces assurances réitérées à plusieurs reprises, se suivant immédiatement, étaient d'autant plus aptes à calmer les susceptibilités de notre Cabinet, qu'en même temps M. Fadieff, évidemment par ordre du Gouvernement Russe, avait abandonné Belgrade. Aussi, dirait-on ici de haute voix que l'Autriche n'a rien à craindre de la part de la Russie, et l'on a fait mettre à jour cette conviction par les journaux officieux.

Cependant, déjà Dimanche passé, un dignitaire de la Cour de mes amis est venu me voir pour me prévenir qu'en haut lieu l'on n'est pas si rassuré qu'on le fait dire, et que, au contraire, il y a plutôt tout lieu de supposer que l'Autriche se prépare très activement à une intervention armée. "Nous ne sommes pas du tout sûrs de la Russie;" m'a dit ce Ministre. "Nous ne pouvons pas admettre qu'elle soit seule à occuper le territoire Turc, nous ne voulons pas occuper seulement la Bosnie, parceque la Hongrie s'y oppose, et il ne nous reste autre chose que d'occuper la Bosnie, la Serbie, l'Herzégovine." Et, en effet, le lendemain, les journaux officieux, et notamment le "Fremdenblatt," organe avoué du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, a publié tout un réquisitoire contre la Serbie, en disant que le danger de ce côté est imminent, et que l'Autriche ne peut plus patienter que quelques semaines, avant de s'assurer à l'aide de sa force armée de ce que le repos de ses populations ne sera pas troublé.

Presqu'au même temps, peut-être même quelques jours avant, le Cabinet de Berlin nous a fait dire par une note confidentielle, que les intérêts de la Prusse à la navigation du Danube, ainsi que dans les pays Slavs de la Turquie, sont parfaitement identiques avec ceux de l'Autriche, et que cette dernière, en les défendant dans son sens, peut toujours compter sur l'appui de l'Empire d'Allemagne; le Prince de Reuss, en se présentant avant hier au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères, a parlé en ce même sens à M. Orczy, remplaçant actuellement M. Andrassy, qui est allé en congé. Il est

donc évident que la Prusse, fort en connivence secrète avec la Russie, ce qui est aussi admissible, soit dans son propre intérêt, pousse l'Autriche à mettre sa main dans la question d'Orient, et à jeter une partie de son armée au-delà de la Save.

Quoiqu'il en soit, toutes les informations prises, je puis vous assurer:—

1. Que les dernières suggestions de la Prusse n'ont éveillé ici le moindre soupçon contre le Cabinet de Berlin.

2. Que la disposition de notre Cour tourne au jour le jour, et très visiblement contre la Russie.

3. Que l'Empereur est presque décidé à occuper les trois provinces ci-dessus nommées, et que cette occupation, à moins qu'en attendant l'on ne change d'opinion, sera mise en exécution dans les trois ou quatre semaines.

4. Qu'on s'efforcera tous les moyens possibles à lui donner un caractère neutre, ni contre la Russie ni contre la Turquie; et,

5. Que, vu que la Serbie, qui se tient tranquille, ne fournira que difficilement à l'Autriche un prétexte plausible à l'occuper, cette occupation, d'après toutes les probabilités, ne pourra avoir lieu qu'à l'époque où la Russie, s'il y réussit, arrivera à s'asseoir sur la rive droite du Danube.

Si j'avais des instructions exactes à l'endroit des sentiments du Gouvernement Turc à ce sujet, je pourrais les représenter, non sans effet, non seulement dans un grand nombre des journaux Allemands et Polonais, mais aussi dans nos sphères politiques qui, depuis quelque temps, exercent une influence assez notable sur les décisions de la Cour.

La disposition des Polonais est toujours très bonne pour la Turquie, à l'exception cependant de plusieurs journaux cléricaux et réactionnaires en même temps, qui n'ont pas de confiance dans l'esprit constitutionnel de la Sublime Porte, se refusent à croire en ce que la Turquie pourra tenir la balance à la . . . . sur le champ de bataille et dissuadent aux Polonais de se ranger de son côté. Cette conduite de ces journaux serait très facile à changer; mais ne fait rien en ce sens. Il y a un va et vient continuel en Pologne, on parle beaucoup, l'on se prépare à une action, mais cette action n'a pas encore bien défini son caractère, parcequ'elle manque de direction.

En attendant de vos nouvelles je vous présente, &c.

No. 12.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 487.)

Therapia, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I BROUGHT to the notice of Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, the suggestion made by Mr. Consul Holmes in his despatch to me No. 40 of the 4th instant, copy of which he transmitted to your Lordship, that Mehemet Ali Pasha should be instructed to take the command of the forces engaged in suppressing the insurrection in the north-west of Bosnia. His Excellency replied that he fully recognized the merits of Mehemet Ali Pasha, but that as the Mushir Suleiman Pasha, who is now Commander-in-chief in Bosnia and Herzegovina of the Imperial troops, was only a year ago Mehemet Ali Pasha's inferior in rank, the latter would never consent to serve under his orders.

The two, his Excellency added, were constantly quarrelling, and until Suleiman Pasha received another appointment, Mehemet Ali Pasha could not be charged with the suppression of the insurrection.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 13.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 488.)

Therapia, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. CONSUL KIRBY GREEN having sent me a copy of his despatch to your Lordship No. 40 of the 7th instant, relating to the alleged decapitation of killed and wounded by Turkish troops near Podgoritza, I at once brought the subject to the notice of Redif Pasha, pointing out the barbarous nature of such acts, and the effect

that they must produce upon public opinion in Europe. His Excellency stated that he was greatly grieved to hear that such outrages were stated to have been committed, and he at once telegraphed, in cypher, to Ali Said Pasha a peremptory order to make the most minute inquiries for the discovery of the culprits, who are to be punished with the utmost severity according to military law. His Excellency ended his telegram by saying that these barbarous acts had produced upon him the most painful impression, especially after the strong instructions on the subject that had been addressed by the Minister of War to Ali Saïb Pasha and to the other Turkish Commanders.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 14.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Recieved June 1.)

(No. 489. Confidential.) *Therapia, May 23, 1877.*

My Lord,

I REQUESTED Commander Stopford, of Her Majesty's ship "Helicon," to obtain information from the captains of English merchant vessels arriving from the Black Sea with reference to the defences of the Russian ports there. He has been good enough to do so, and has given me the inclosed Memorandum on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 14.

Defences of Russian Ports in the Black Sea, gathered from Merchant Vessels.

Poti.—Torpedoes 4,000 yards off shore. Apparently small. Defended by earth works. Guns of an old description—not rifled.

Kertch.—Strongly fortified. Ships navigated in and out by Russians, officers and crew sent below. Passage as used at present is as shown in the plan, but the "Robin Hood," a merchant steamer, went straight into the red buoys and skirted close round to the left. Torpedoes are buoyed with red buoys. Englishmen employed on fortifications. Three Russian gunboats here.

Nicolaieff. No torpedoes, but being fortified. Earthworks building.

Orichakoff.—Passage used through torpedoes appears not to be different from that ordinarily navigated. Ships taken in and out by Russians. Circular ironclad "Popoff" inside the spit. A small man-of-war as guard ship.

Odessa.—Circular ironclad outside close to guard ship, probably to exercise guns; formerly she was at the head of the bay. Ships taken in and out by Russians. The passage appears to be intricate and guided by torpedoes. The plan is merely a rough sketch by a merchant captain.

Taganrog.—Unfortified.

These descriptions being gathered from merchant captains, cannot of course be entirely relied upon; the description of the passages in and out of the harbours have been in all instances corroborated.

(Signed) R. STOPFORD, *Lieutenant and Commander.*

"Helicon," Constantinople, May 22, 1877.

No. 15.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 490.) *Therapia, May 23, 1877.*

My Lord,

A BULGARIAN priest of Toultcha having telegraphed to Dimitraki Effendi, a Member of the Turkish Parliament, that the Circassians had committed some outrages in the neighbourhood of the town, the Porte at once asked for information on the subject from the local authorities. They replied that the accounts sent to Constantinople were much exaggerated, and that there had only been some cases of cattle-lifting. The Porte, not satisfied with this answer, has sent a Commission, composed of Dimitraki Effendi and a Member of the Council of State, to make inquiries on the spot, and report to the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 16.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 491.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May 23, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of an Address from the Bulgarian Bishop and notables, and other inhabitants of Philippopoli, to the Porte. I have spoken to the Bulgarian Deputies, to the Turkish Parliament, and to others, and I have reason to believe that the Address does represent, on the whole, the feelings of the great majority of the Bulgarian subjects of the Sultan. I have already mentioned to your Lordship the remarkable statement made to me by Dr. Washburn, the Principal of the Robert College, who is intimately acquainted with the Bulgarian question, that out of the many hundred young Bulgarians educated under his superintendence in that establishment not one was implicated in the events of last year. Only one was arrested on suspicion, and immediately released.

How far the Bulgarians would be disposed, or would be able, to act upon the feelings and opinions expressed in the Philippopoli Address, if the Russian armies were victorious in the midst of them, is another question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 16.

Address to the Porte from Bulgarians of Philippopoli.

L'EVEQUE, les notables, et plusieurs autres habitants Bulgares de Philippopoli viennent d'envoyer à la Sublime Porte, par l'entremise du Gouverneur de cette ville, l'adresse suivante :—

"Nous soussignés, habitants Bulgares de Philippopoli, nous nous empressons avec le plus profond respect, d'exprimer par la présente ce que notre conscience et notre cœur nous ont dicté dans les circonstances actuelles.

"Nous avons appris avec une grande douleur, par les journaux, que la Russie, animée d'intentions malveillantes, veut se donner le rôle d'améliorer le sort des Chrétiens, et spécialement celui des Bulgares. Mais le but qu'elle poursuit n'est que de nous faire passer pour rebelles aux yeux du Gouvernement Impérial, de semer la haine et le désordre entre deux peuples compatriotes, Musulmans et Bulgares, qui ont vécu en parfaite fraternité depuis tant de siècles et de trouver un prétexte pour déclarer une guerre injuste contre l'Empire Ottoman. A l'instar de nos aïeux, ayant toujours vécu en frères avec nos compatriotes Musulmans et ayant été toujours fidèles au Gouvernement Impérial, nous n'avons aucun besoin de ces prétendues améliorations que l'étranger veut nous imposer pour trouver un moyen sûr de parvenir à ses fins. Aujourd'hui, où sous les auspices de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan Abdul Hamid (que Dieu conserve Sa Majesté pour longtemps sur son trône glorieux) le Gouvernement Impérial introduit chaque jour de nouvelles et plus grandes réformes dans l'Empire et consacre tous ses efforts pour établir l'égalité entre tous ses sujets sans distinction; aujourd'hui où nous devions jouir en paix de ces libertés que notre gracieux Souverain vient de nous octroyer, et travailler à notre bien-être moral et matériel, nous regrettons profondément que la Russie se serve du nom Bulgare pour susciter des embarras au Gouvernement Impérial.

"Ne pouvant souffrir davantage ces procédés indignes, nous nous empressons de déclarer hautement encore une fois notre loyauté et notre dévouement envers le Gouvernement Impérial et nous prions votre Excellence de vouloir bien soumettre notre humble adresse aux pieds de l'auguste Trône de Sa Majesté Impériale en l'assurant des vœux que nous faisons jour et nuit au Très-Haut afin qu'il conserve la gloire du Trône Ottoman. Nous prions aussi le Gouvernement Impérial de conserver

toujours aux Bulgares les mêmes sympathies dont ils ont eu maintes preuves éclatantes.

"Veuillez agréer, &c."

Suivent les signatures de l'Evêque, des notables, et d'un grand nombre d'habitants Bulgares de Philippopoli.

Philippopoli, le $\frac{7}{19}$ Avril, 1877.

No. 17.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 494.)

Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches I have received from Her Majesty's Consular Agents at Salonica, Ineboli, and Adrianople, respecting the state of affairs in their respective districts.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 17.

Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Salonica, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that the Governor-General of this vilayet, Dervish Pasha, has received orders from the Porte to send all the "Sowaree zaptiehs" on horseback which are to be found in the sandjaks of Serres, Drama, Monastir, and Salonica, to the Serdar Ekrem, Abd-ul Kerim Pasha, at Rustchuk, but he has decided to send only 65 out of every 100 men. These amount to 400 men altogether.

But 200 zaptiehs on horseback will be a very small force for the transaction of the Government's business in the villages.

To protect this city there are 450 National Guards, who have arms of their own, —a corps which has been called into existence since the late murder of the Consuls a year ago.

The brigand, Young Gheglu, mentioned in a previous report, has given himself up, with twelve of his followers, and has declared he will be instrumental in capturing other gangs of brigands. His Excellency Dervish Pasha has promised him full pardon and a decoration from the Porte if he be as good as his word.

The prohibition to export grain has been countermanded here; but I hear from Mr. Vice-Consul Suter, on the 9th instant, that it has been enforced at Volo, but that it will not affect contracts entered into prior to the late proclamation of the recent order. Volo is in a different position to Salonica, there grain is scarce.

I have, &c.

(Signed) E. BARKER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 17.

Vice-Consul Vedasti to Consul-General Fawcett.

Ineboli, le 12 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

EN me conformant aux ordres que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me transmettre par votre Circulaire, en date du 11 Avril expiré, je m'empresse de vous informer que notre ville, de même que ses alentours, sont en parfaite tranquillité, et aucun cas de violence ou autre au détriment des Chrétiens n'a encore heureusement eu lieu jusqu'à ce jour, malgré le séjour pendant une semaine de 700 Mustafiz. Ces derniers se sont embarqués aujourd'hui à bord du paquebot Ottoman le "Salonique," de la Compagnie Mahsoussié, à destination de Samsoun, pour y être exercés et de les diriger à fur et mesure à Erzeroum. On attend ici d'aujourd'hui à demain un autre bataillon de

Mustafiz de même des environs d'Inéboli, dont 400 entrent en ce moment dans la ville, de même pour Samsoun.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) V. VEDASTI.

Inclosure 3 in No. 17.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, May 18, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE had my attention called by Mr. Consul Blunt to an article in the "Times" of the 2nd instant respecting a Turk who was killed in the month of May of last year in the neighbourhood of Malgara, and another man said to have been shot and his wife and son wounded by Circassians at Tatar-keuy, about three weeks since, and detailing alleged grievances and complaints of Christians in this province.

In reply thereto, I have the honour to state to your Excellency that these occurrences not having taken place within this Vice-Consular district, and not having had an opportunity of visiting that part of the country to make inquiries, I am not in a position to be able to speak positively as to what did happen there.

I nevertheless give your Excellency what was related in Adrianople at the time, which I believe to be a correct version of the affair near Malgara.

In the month of May of last year a Turk named Hassan, of Gona, near Malgara, was killed; and it being strongly suspected that certain Bulgarians of Yeli-Gona were the authors of the crime, numbers of them were imprisoned, among whom there happened to be men quite innocent of the affair.

I submit that the authorities are not to be blamed in this matter, as they have the right of arresting and securing as many persons as they may think necessary to carry on investigations.

The accusation made against the Kaïmakam and Cadi of seeking to put a price on their liberation should be dismissed altogether as false. As related here at the time, it was the friends of the prisoners who offered a money payment to those officials if they would release them, and, not succeeding, got up a story about a ransom having been demanded.

The charge brought against Mehemet Raschid Effendi, the Kaïmakam of Hassanboyli (Caza of Kizil-Aghatch), of extorting money under threat of denouncing certain Bulgarians as insurgents, should likewise be dismissed. The affair was related to me by the Bulgarians themselves when I visited the place the other day.

Five leading men of that village, Giorghi Martin, Dovno Giorghi, Angel-Oglou Giorghi, Angel-Oglou Martin, and Raio Oglou Giorghi, each voluntarily subscribed 2 Turkish liras towards defraying the expenses of the Kaimakam's marriage; there was no compulsion in the matter. I asked Giorghi Martin if any receipt was given. His reply was that the Kaïmakam being a poor man, with only a monthly stipend of 12 liras, they wished to make him a present, as he was about to be married.

The sensational story that the above official most barbarously beat and knocked out the eye of a grocer's lad is a gross exaggeration of a very simple affair.

Vassil-Oglou Giorgi was chastised for his insolence to the Kaïmakam, but not in such a way as to leave any mark or disfigurement on his face. On requiring to see the lad, I was told he was quite well and doing business in Yamboli. The Kaïmakam has since been dismissed, some say for this affair; but I am inclined to believe he was discharged for not being more active in collecting and forwarding Government dues.

As regards the affair of the three Turks who were murdered by Circassians near Bey Mehalle, in the same caza, I have already reported the matter in my despatch of the 6th instant.

I am making every inquiry as to the truth respecting the alleged murder in the Greek village of Tatar-keui, which I am very much inclined to doubt, as such an occurrence as mentioned in the "Times," if it had really taken place, would have been the talk of the town, and I would certainly have heard of it.

In conclusion, I beg to remark that, as a rule, I have generally found that the grievances and complaints of the Christian Rayahs of this province are not only mixed up with all sorts of absurdities and pretensions, but they are often based on very slight foundations, and very frequently distorted by the most monstrous exaggerations to serve their own ends.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. DUPUIS.

P.S.—It will be necessary to go to Tatar-keui to learn the truth of this last outrage, but I shall await instructions before doing so.

J. H. D.

No. 18.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 495.)

Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Prevesa, forwarding copy of a letter from Janina respecting the movements of a certain Constantine Aravandinos.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 18.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Confidential.)

Prevesa, May 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy and translation of Mr. Kypriotis' despatch, Confidential, of the 3rd instant, relative to the departure for Athens of Constantine Aravandinos; the disappearance of his associate, Elijah Charitos; and the escape, on the 30th ultimo, of the brigands, Shipbas Mariotis, and their followers.

Mr. Kypriotis also reports that the authorities at Janina have been informed that insurrectionary movements had been discovered in Thessaly, and that the authorities suspect that similar acts will also take place in Epirus.

As regards Constantine Aravandinos, I beg to state that he came to Prevesa on Sunday last, and took steamer for Corfu.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 18.

M. Kypriotis to Vice-Consul Blakeney.

(Translation.)
(Confidential.)

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that Constantine Aravandinos left yesterday for Athens, and that his associate, Elijah Charitos, of Argyrotastro, has not been seen here for some days, but most likely he went to his district. On Monday last, the 30th ultimo, the Greek brigands who had taken refuge here, Stupas and Marioli, escaped together with their followers, fifteen men in all. The nephew of Hadji-Gounára, who long ago had been appointed sub-officer of police, and who was pardoned after his uncle's death, also escaped with eight of his band.

The local authorities received telegraphic news yesterday from Thessaly that insurrectionary movements have made themselves manifest there, and they suspect that the same thing will also take place in Epirus. The departure of the above-mentioned individuals, and the anxiety and caution displayed by those who have remained behind, shows that the suspicions of the Governor are not groundless.

I am, &c.

(Signed) B. KYPRIOTIS.

No. 19.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 496.)

Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Consul Blunt, forwarding a list drawn up by Mr. Stoney, Agent to the Constantinople Relief Committee, showing the average number of persons per family in fifty-five Bulgarian villages situated in the district of Philippopolis.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 19.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir,

Philippopolis, May 17, 1877.

AS some public discussion has taken place in England regarding the average number of persons composing a Bulgarian household, I venture to forward herewith a copy of a tabular statement drawn up by Mr. Stoney, special Agent of the Central Relief Committee of Constantinople in this district, which will, I imagine, definitively settle the question.

According to this table the average for fifty-five villages gone over by Mr. Stoney, is 5·007 persons per family.

I may add, from my own observation, that instances of more than one family inhabitating the same town are extremely rare.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. R. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 19.

List showing the Average Number of Persons in each Family in fifty-five Villages in the District of Philippopoli.

	Number of Villages.	Number of Families Relieved.	Number of Persons Relieved.	Number of Persons per Family.
	Zindjidly	177	850	4·8
	Nova Sela	308	1,555	5·0
	Tchamkdjikoi	25	143	5·7
	Krastowo	72	374	5·2
		1,230	4,320	3·5
5	Otlouk-kemi	287	1,611	5·6
	Stoeldja	56	213	3·8
	,, at Bazardjik	301	1,017	3·4
	Chesvuen	380	1,182	3·1
	,, at Karlowo	89	400	4·5
10	Bulo	120	647	5·4
	Leshnik	99	546	5·5
	Gheren	125	788	6·3
	Papnitza	184	883	4·8
	Ouroushlou-Mahalé	136	870	6·4
15	Ereli	60	394	6·5
	Larignent	58	321	5·4
	Alvadjik	82	447	5·4
	Dedowo	66	368	5·5
	Boïcowo	100	507	5·0
20	Kozarsko	155	883	5·4
	Peroushtitza	90	604	6·7
	Keupali	38	200	5·5
	Stanyowo	36	185	5·1
	Laridja	104	523	5·0
25	Zdrebitchka	170	620	3·6
	Bratzi-kowo	64	292	4·5
	Begha	72	479	6·6
	Ali Hodja	177	1,001	5·6
	Radlowo	18	76	4·2
30	Pastoucha	110	602	5·8
	Metchka	376	2,093	5·5
	Petrich	268	1,435	5·5
	Smoleko	81	507	6·2
	Kamenitza	370	2,096	5·7
35	Polbreu	183	1,005	5·5
	Lesitchino	142	719	5·0
	Ghelveré	84	458	5·4
	Shtirkowo	57	330	5·7
	Dinka	587	3,643	6·2
40	Banik	659	2,935	4·5
	Peshtera, Bulgarian	129	504	3·9
	,, Turkish	119	726	6·1
	Yassikoria	61	329	5·4
	Ishikishla	99	554	5·6
	Elshitza	70	365	5·2
45	Shahlar	183	1,077	5·8
	Kara-Moussal	423	2,537	6·0
	Vetrew	32	163	5·0
	Derè-Harman	121	659	5·4
	Sero-Harman	161	873	5·4
50	Yenik-Harman	186	971	5·2
	Tserowo	254	1,359	5·3
	Muhowo	269	1,273	4·7
	Rakowitza	68	370	5·5
	Djumali	140	822	5·9
55	Kaligiard			
		10,110	50,022	

(Signed) W. L. STONEY.

Philippopoli, May 16, 1877.

No. 19*.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 497.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May* 23, 1877.

I RECEIVED yesterday your Lordship's instruction to address a representation to the Porte similar to that which the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador has been instructed to make respecting the freedom of the navigation of the Danube. I had to call upon my Austro-Hungarian colleague, and I availed myself of the opportunity to ask him what he had done in the matter. His Excellency said that he had already addressed the Turkish Government on the subject, and had received an assurance from them that, whilst the present state of affairs continued and the Russians did not enter Servian waters or territory, the free navigation of the river above the Timok would be respected. Count Zichy considers this assurance satisfactory, and thinks that if I say a word on the subject to the Grand Vizier or Safvet Pasha it will be sufficient. I shall take an early occasion to do so.

I understood from Count Zichy that, whilst Austrian vessels are to be allowed to go freely up the Danube above the junction of the Timok, they will not be allowed to descend the river below that point.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 20.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 498. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May 23, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 477 of the 19th instant, I have the honour to inclose copy of a report drawn up by the late German Consul at Salonica (Mr. Abbott), for his Government, upon the convents of Mount Athos, and the proceedings of Russia in the Peninsula. The document has been obtained for me by Mr. Blunt, who requests that its communication to me may be considered strictly confidential. It gives a curious and, I have every reason to believe, a trustworthy account of the manner in which, through the Russian Consul at Salonica and other Russian secret agents, the Greek monasteries are being gradually brought completely under the control of Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Report respecting Mount Athos.

L'ANCIENNE Péninsule qui s'appelle aujourd'hui *Ἅγιον Ὄρος*, Montagne Sainte ou Mont Athos, contient vingt monastères dont chacun est propriétaire d'un territoire d'une étendue proportionnée. Ces vingt monastères nomment annuellement vingt représentants qui se rassemblent à Karyas, espèce de foire et rendezvous général de tous les couvents, où ils représentent les monastères et administrent les affaires. Parmi ces représentants on en choisit chaque année cinq qui représentent l'assemblée des vingt. De ces cinq membres est élu successivement et à tour de rôle le Président, *Πρωτεπιστάτης*; mais tous les monastères n'ont pas également le droit d'en élir un; ce droit est réservé à ceux de Lava, Vatopedi, Iviron, Dionysiou et Xyropotami.

Chaque monastère a un territoire lui appartenant et est habité par 60 jusqu'à 600 moines selon son importance et selon son étendue; en dehors de l'église centrale dite *Καθολικων*, c'est-à-dire, général, il y a plusieurs chapelles sur chaque côté de l'enceinte du monastère. Il y a deux classes de monastères: les communaux *Κοινόβια* et les *Ἰδιορρύθμια*, c'est-à-dire, dont les moines vivent à leur guise. Les Kinobia sont gouvernés pour ainsi dire par un supérieur (*Ἡγουμενος*), ont table communal, et les moines ne peuvent rien posséder à eux, tout y est en commun. Les Idorrythmes n'ont pas de supérieur et sont gouvernés par une espèce d'aristocratie de quelques uns parmi eux qui ont le titre de *Γέροντες*. Quant à l'administration interne les Gérontes choisissent parmi eux deux surveillants (*Ἐπιστάτας*), qui sont changés annuellement. Dans ces monastères-ci le repas commun n'existe point et les membres de la communauté peuvent vivre comme bon leur semble.

Dans la circonférence de chaque monastère qui, en général, est vaste, il y a nombre de scètes (*Σκῆται*), cellules (*Κελλια*), et ermitages (*Ἐρημητήρια*). On donne le nom de scète à une espèce de chapelle qui a quelques chambres (cellules) dans la cour, et un peu de terrain labourable. Le chef de ces monastères en miniature est un Géron qui a sous ses ordres depuis deux jusqu'à vingt moines, pas davantage.

La cellule est aussi une chapelle qui a également quelques chambrettes et un terrain attenant. Elle est habitée par un Géron qui a sous ses ordres seulement deux moines *ὑποταυτινοι* (subalternes).

Les ermitages sont des endroits éloignés des monastères où habite un seul moine appelé ermite.

Tous ces établissements qui se trouvent dans le territoire d'un monastère quelconque reconnaissent la juridiction de ce même monastère, qui leur en cède la possession et la jouissance moyennant un kanor, qui est payé chaque fois qu'un nouveau Chef (*Γέρον Προεστάμενος*) de scète ou cellule est nommé. Les différends qui surviennent dans ces établissements sont vidés en première instance par le monastère dont ils dépendent et en appelle par l'assemblée générale. Chacun de ces chefs a droit ou de laisser la succession à un de ses subalternes ou bien de céder même de son vivant le gouvernement à un des autres Gérontes; dans tous les cas le nouveau chef doit reconnaître la juridiction du monastère et lui payer le kanor fixé par le contrat primitif.

Voici la liste des couvents avec leurs dépendances et le nombre approximatif des moines :—

Couvents.	Scètes.	Cellules.	Ermitages.	Moines. Grecs.	Russes.	Bulgares et Serbes.	Roumains.	Total.
1. Lavra	4	50	15	370	300	..	90	760
2. St. Paul	4	1	..	195	..	..	35	230
3. Dénis	4	4	..	100	..	..	..	100
4. Grégoire	..	..	..	120	..	..	..	120
5. Simopétra	..	..	..	80	..	..	..	80
6. Xiropotami	..	..	..	65	..	..	..	65
7. St. Pantéléimon (Russe)	1	1	..	..	660	..	..	660
8. Xénophon	..	..	..	160	..	..	..	160
9. Dodyari	..	..	..	50	..	..	..	50
10. Constamonito	..	..	..	35	..	..	..	35
11. Zographo	..	3	..	..	..	240	..	240
12. Hiliantari	..	12	..	..	10	180	..	190
13. Sfigmeno (Serré)	..	..	..	110	..	..	..	110
14. Nntopedi	2	25	..	330	300	..	..	630
15. Pantokrator	1	8	30*	75	250	..	..	325
16. Stéuronikita	..	4	..	55	..	..	..	55
17. Konkoumoussi	1	12	..	140	..	..	..	140
18. Iviron	1	25	..	285	..	..	..	285
19. Philothéou	..	15	..	80	..	..	..	80
20. Carrieulla	..	24	..	145	..	..	..	145
				2,395	1,520	420	125	4,460

* Diverses habitations.

Ces monastères furent richement dotés par les Empereurs Byzantins et deux d'entre eux, ceux de Zographos et de Hiliantari, par les Princes régnants Bulgares et les Serbes lors de leur invasion en Macédoine, c'est ce qui fait que depuis lors des moines Bulgares et Serbes furent reçus et se rendirent maîtres graduellement des susdits deux monastères.

Pendant le règne de Catherine la Grande diverses offrandes ont été de même envoyées au Mont Athos, consistant principalement en vêtements et ustensiles sacerdotaux, et c'est alors que des moines Russes apparurent pour la première fois, mais ils venaient si rarement et en si petit nombre qu'ils se perdaient dans la foule des moines Grecs.

D'après la tradition il existait jadis vers l'intérieur à une demi-heure de distance du Couvent de St. Pantéléimon ("le tout charitable") le monastère appelé Zélougos, ou de Roussi (prénom commun parmi les familles Grecques), où il y avait des moines Russes aussi. Vers la fin du siècle passé une rixe étant survenue entre les moines des deux nationalités, les Russes mirent le feu au couvent et tous se dispersèrent; mais après quelques années, vers 1803, le nommé Savas, moine de la Morée, entreprit sa reconstruction; pourtant, au lieu de le faire sur l'ancien terrain, il préféra la côte et en effet y fit bâtir, grâce aux secours de Scarlate Kallimachi des Provinces-Unies, et des Grecs de l'Asie Mineure, le Couvent actuel de St. Pantéléimon.

Jusqu'en 1836 aucun Russe n'est entré dans ce couvent, mais vers la fin de cette année le nommé Jérôme, moine Russe qui habitait une cellule de Capsalla (un endroit du Mont Athos) se mit en tête, ou spontanément ou par ordre supérieur, de s'y insinuer afin d'introduire des moines Russes. Profitant de la pénurie extrême du couvent il se présenta au père Gérasimos le vieux et ignorant supérieur, et demanda la permission d'y entrer, avec deux moines, et offrant en même temps au couvent 30,000 piastres et des vêtements sacerdotaux. Les moines Grecs acceptèrent sans le moindre soupçon l'offre de Jérôme, qui a su faire au bout de quelque temps augmenter sensiblement le nombre des Russes en flattant avec finesse et dextérité les simples moines et leur promettant l'aide et l'assistance de la Russie; il tenta même une fois de prendre la direction du couvent. Jusqu'en 1856 il agissait avec une grande circonspection, mais depuis cette année-là les Russes commencèrent à agir avec plus d'énergie, ce qui finit par dévoiler leurs desseins. C'est en 1856, juste après la guerre de Crimée, que des Russes arrivaient à ce couvent par centaines et se faisaient moines; et

des bâteaux à vapeur Russes débarquaient au Mont Athos de troupes considérables de pèlerins Russes, des vêtements sacerdotaux, des livres, et surtout des provisions de bouche et des habillements en quantité, introduit le tout inaperçu. Ces objets étaient offerts par la Russie de manière qu'au bout de quelque temps le couvent a pris l'air d'un dépôt Russe ayant pour but de pourvoir aux besoins non seulement du Mont Athos mais voir même de la Macédoine.

Quand enfin les moines Grecs comprirent les desseins du père Jérôme et voulurent protester, celui-ci réussit à soulever contre eux le courroux de sa créature, le vieux supérieur Gérasimos, tombé déjà en enfance, qui les expulsa du couvent et les remplaça par des moines Russes. De cette manière le nombre des Grecs diminua jusqu'à 80, qui n'avaient plus aucune influence, tandis que les Russes atteignirent le nombre de 600; ils s'emparèrent en même temps de l'administration entière et absolue des affaires du couvent. Ils ont eu soin pourtant, afin de voiler d'une manière convenable cet empiétement et afin de jeter de la poudre aux yeux de la communauté du Mont Athos, de conserver Grecque l'église principale du couvent comme elle était auparavant, mais en revanche ils construisirent sur le flanc nord du couvent une église beaucoup plus spacieuse et capable de contenir tous les 600 moines et autant des pèlerins qui prit le modeste nom de chapelle. Cette nouvelle bâtisse avait naturellement besoin d'une quantité de cellules proportionnées au nombre des moines Russes, qui augmentait de jour en jour, et le tout fut entouré d'un enclos en pierre. Il s'en suivit donc que les bâtisses qui ont été ultérieurement ajoutées sont devenues le corps principal et par leur étendue effacèrent l'ancien Couvent de St. Pantéléimon. Il est vrai qu'il porte encore le même nom, mais il y a ajouté la dénomination de "Couvent Russe," plausiblement justifié par le fait que ce vieux couvent incendié portait le nom de Roussi.

Le Père Jérôme cependant ne s'arrêta pas ici; vu que le nombre des moines Russes augmentait et augmente de jour en jour, il entreprit la construction d'un couvent beaucoup plus grand et choisit pour cela l'ancien terrain du Couvent *Ζιχουρίου* et ceci en déclarant qu'il ne voulait construire qu'une simple scète (*Σκήτη*).

Il n'est pas difficile de concevoir que ce qui avait eu lieu en St. Pantéléimon, se passait presqu'aussi simultanément et sous le même mot d'ordre à divers points de la montagne. Parceque peu après l'apparition du Père Jérôme des moines Russes arrivèrent au Mont Athos après avoir quitté les superbes monastères de leur patrie et demandèrent d'acheter des scètes et des cellules en offrant des sommes fabuleuses pour y passer leur vie et sauver leur âme. Ils offraient par exemple jusqu'à 30,000 piastres pour une cellule que le couvent souverain vendait ordinairement pour 2,000. Il n'est pas étonnant que cet argument très persuasif employé dans un temps où les couvents se trouvaient dans la détresse et où aucune espèce de soupçon contre les Russes n'entrait dans la pensée naïve des moines, il n'est pas étonnant, dis-je, qu'avec de pareils moyens ils aient réussi de devenir maîtres d'un grand nombre de scètes et cellules.

La confiscation des biens des monastères par le Gouvernement des Principautés Danubiennes a aussi éminemment contribué à la réussite des desseins de Jérôme. Les principaux revenus du Mont Athos venaient des Principautés; les couvents qui furent ainsi privés de leurs revenus habituels se trouvèrent tout d'un coup au bout de leurs ressources, et par conséquent les Russes ne rencontrèrent pas des difficultés sérieuses à la réalisation de leur désir, c'est-à-dire de prendre possession de leurs scètes et de leurs cellules.

En entrant en possession, les Russes promettaient toujours de se tenir religieusement aux engagements vis-à-vis des couvents assumés par souverains les premiers occupants des scètes et cellules par même écrit; mais à peine maîtres de ces habitations ils oubliaient d'une manière surprenante et leurs promesses et leurs engagements, et convertissaient les cellules en scètes et ces dernières en monastères splendides, grâce aux bâtisses qu'ils construisaient pour loger la foule des moines arrivant de la Russie. Ainsi par exemple lorsqu'ils occupèrent la Scète de St. André, dite "du Sérail," appartenant au Couvent de Vatopédi et près de Karyas, avec l'obligation par écrit de n'y jamais faire entrer plus de vingt moines, ils l'entourèrent graduellement d'un enclos et bâtirent dans l'enceinte une église magnifique dont la pierre fondamentale a été posée en 1866 ou en 1867, par le Grand Duc Alexis lui-même, qui à ce qu'on prétend s'est rendu au Mont Athos expressément pour cela. Cette soi-disante scète compte à l'heure qu'il est environ 300 moines, élisent aussi un supérieur, bien que les scètes, comme j'ai dit plus haut, n'en aient point le droit, ce droit étant réservé aux monastères.

La scète en question est devenue si importante qu'elle rivalise même avec le

"Couvent Russe" par rapport aux riches offrandes et donations qui arrivent continuellement de la Russie.

Outre la scète sus-mentionnée les Russes parvinrent à acheter plusieurs cellules dans le territoire de divers couvents, mais c'est notamment dans l'endroit nommé Kapsalla, et dans la Scète du Prophète Elie appartenant au Couvent de *Παντοκράτωρ* (Maître de l'Univers) dans la Scète de St. Artème, dépendant du Couvent de Lavra, et autour de la Scète de St. Anne, qu'ils sont installés en grand nombre. Ces deux dernières scètes aussi sont devenues presque des couvents, vu qu'elles comptent chacune plus de cent moines.

Il est aisé de comprendre que si aujourd'hui certaines cellules et scètes ne contiennent que des Russes, ils vont subir sous peu le même sort que les Scètes du St. André, Prophète Elie, et St. Artème; car la manière dont les contributions et donations affluent de la Russie est vraiment inexplicable; et ce qu'il y a d'encore plus inexplicable c'est la facilité avec laquelle le Père Jérôme trouve les sommes considérables d'argent pour l'achat des nouvelles cellules ou pour l'extension de ceux qui existent déjà.

Il paraît aussi que les Russes ont trouvé le climat du Mont Athos tellement salubre qu'ils ont eu l'idée d'acheter des fermes même en dehors de la Péninsule et de construire des *Μέτοχια* (métochi est une propriété quelconque en dehors du Mont Athos, appartenant à un couvent et administrée par des moines de ce couvent). Ainsi par exemple le "Couvent Russe" a fait construire un splendide metochi sur l'Isthme de la Péninsule du Mont Athos près du Canal de Xerxès, sur la position nommée Chornitsa, le dit établissement aujourd'hui abrite plus de cent moines et domine l'entrée pour ainsi dire du Mont Athos. Entre Cavalla et l'embouchure du Strymon, dans la localité nommée Leftéri (anciennement Eleuteriompolis) ils ont aussi acheté une ferme très-considérable dans laquelle ils ont fait élever une bâtisse capable de contenir un bon nombre de personnes; actuellement plus de soixante moines y demeurent. Cet établissement domine la route par laquelle les pèlerins venant de la Thrace et de la Bulgarie doivent passer pour se rendre au Mont Athos. Il sert en même temps comme logement (*μετόχια*) pour ceux qui se rendent au Mont Athos par voie de Cavalla; là ils trouvent des moyens spéciaux pour leur transport tant par mer que par terre. De cette manière les moines de Leftéri sont certains que tous les pèlerins ne sauraient s'égarer, en demandant l'hospitalité aux monastères Grecs; car les susdits moines ont un soin particulier à ce que ces individus soient conduits directement au "Couvent Russe," d'où ils sont dirigés vers les diverses scètes et cellules Russes, et quelquefois aux couvents de Zographos (Bulgare) et Hiliandari (Serbe). Ces pèlerins retournent donc chez eux sans avoir vu les autres couvents, de sorte qu'ils se forment l'idée que le Mont Athos est essentiellement Russe.

Les Russes ont encore acheté une propriété sur la Péninsule de Kassandra (Paliène) et y construisirent un métochi des plus spacieux qui abrite plusieurs moines. Pour appauvrir autant que faire se peut les moines Grecs les Russes ont eu soin d'importer de la Russie des quantités immenses de petites images, croix, chapelets, &c., qui jadis étaient la seule ressource des ermites et ascètes Grecs qui les troquaient contre des provisions de bouche et des vêtements. Ces ouvrages faits en Russie sont vendus comme travail des ermites du Mont Athos dans de vastes magasins construits expressément au "Couvent Russe." La vénération et la piété, dont les Russes font preuve envers la Montagne Sainte, se sont accrues jusqu'à un tel dégré, que le sexe féminin aussi a commencé à suivre l'exemple des hommes.

Depuis quelques années il est à remarquer qu'une sollicitude toute particulière avait saisi les Russes dans le but de fonder un couvent de femmes, et ils avaient choisi pour cela une localité, sise près du village Grec Terissé, au fond du Golphe d'Akanthe; mais par une révélation une position plus adaptée fut trouvée dans le village de Roveniki, situé à peu près au centre des Madenschoria (villages aux Scories) de la Chalcédique, et dominent, non-seulement toute la péninsule, mais aussi la route de la Macédoine au Mont Athos.

Une vieille Grecque, nommée Gérakina, inspirée très probablement par les roubles, vit en songe la Sainte Vierge, lui révélant un endroit du village pour y faire bâtir une église, endroit où était autrefois la Chapelle de St. Constantin, détruite pendant la révolution de 1821; les simples paysans ajoutèrent foi à cette soi-disante révélation, creusèrent sur l'endroit indiqué, où ils trouvèrent un morceau d'une image de la Vierge et de l'eau, et y bâtirent une petite église, dédiée à la Vierge; ils bâtirent en même temps deux cellules pour y loger les visiteurs.

Peu de mois après, une nonne Russe apparaît au village, et est tellement touchée

par la narration des faits ci-dessus relatés, qu'elle se décide d'y passer sa vie, et dans ce but elle fait venir de sa patrie deux autres nonnes, avec des images et des vêtements sacerdotaux. Les paysans de Roveniki ont été tellement attendris par sa manière douceresse et sa piété fervente, qu'ils l'ont laissée presque maîtresse de l'église et des deux cellules. En attendant un observateur curieux aurait pu remarquer que ces deux cellules de l'église attiraient, non-seulement les Consuls de Russie en Macédoine, mais aussi les voyageurs Russes, parmi lesquels se distinguaient très-souvent des personnes d'une certaine importance. Dernièrement, la femme et la nièce du Consul Leontiew, prédécesseur du titulaire actuel, y séjournèrent longtemps, et même il courait le bruit que Madame Leontiew avait l'intention de prendre le voile et de s'installer comme Supérieure du Couvent, que l'on avait l'intention de construire. Ce bruit paraissait d'autant plus fondé que la susdite nonne fit prendre des photographies du site et des environs, et partit pour la Russie pour ramasser de l'argent destiné à la réalisation du projet. Et en effet, vers le mois de Juillet 1872, des maçons envoyés par le "Couvent Russe" commencèrent, à l'insu des villageois, à bâtir un mûr autour de l'église, pour servir comme enclos du couvent. Les habitants du village, ayant appris ceci, se sont rendus sur les lieux et ont détruit le mur, malgré les menaces du 3e Drogman et du cavass du Consulat de Russie de cette ville, qui furent envoyés sur place par M. Léontiew, titulaire encore du Consulat de Salonique, quoique demeurant depuis six mois déjà au Mont Athos. Sur ce, les villageois s'adressèrent aux autorités locales, afin d'y faire protéger leur église contre les intentions empiétantes des Russes. C'est ainsi, que pour le moment au moins, ces projets de ravissement et d'érection d'un couvent de femmes ont été frustrés; mais tout de même les trois nonnes y demeurent toujours et le susdit Drogman ne cesse de rôder autour du village et emploie tous les moyens pour persuader les villageois de céder contre une somme assez ronde l'église et ses appartenances, mais c'est probable qu'après tout les villageois céderont pour payer des dettes de la communauté envers le Gouvernement, qui ne cesse de les poursuivre et d'en emprisonner les notables, bien qu'il soit convaincu que le village se trouve dans une misère extrême. Ce sont ces dettes que les Russes proposent de payer, environ 0,000 livres, contre la cession de l'église avec son territoire.

Ces progrès inquiétants des Russes ont enfin attiré l'attention des moines Grecs du Mont Athos, qui, ayant sous les yeux l'exemple du St. Panthéïmon, craignent de se voir tout-à-fait expulsés, s'ils continuent à permettre aux Russes de s'insinuer de cette manière dans leurs scètes et cellules; par conséquent ils se comportent maintenant avec beaucoup de réserve et mettent de la précaution dans leurs relations avec les Russes.

Mais ceux-ci, profitant de la pauvreté actuelle des couvents Grecs, et promettant de riches secours, persuadent les plus simples d'entre les moines que leur entrée dans les couvents sera plutôt avantageuse que nuisible. C'est en s'y prenant ainsi qu'ils réussissent à former des factions en leur faveur dans les couvents mêmes, et ainsi ils parviennent parfois à faire expulser jusqu'au supérieur lui-même, et à faire élir à sa place la personne désignée par Jérôme. C'est comme cela que les choses se passèrent dernièrement dans le Couvent de St. Paul, où par suite des machinations de Jérôme le Supérieur Gérasimo fut expulsé pour faire place à un moine du couvent Russe; la même chose au Couvent de Xénophon, où après le décès du Supérieur, un instrument du Père Jérôme fut élu; ces deux Supérieurs furent installé par Jérôme lui-même.

C'est à cause de ces derniers incidents que l'affaire, dite question de St. Paul, a été soulevée et a obligé le Patriarchat Grec de Constantinople de se décider à envoyer sur les lieux une Commission d'enquête.

Les Russes par principe n'omettent jamais aucun moyen pour acquérir de l'influence sur les couvents Grecs, et pour les obliger de recevoir des moines Russes. Par exemple, auparavant les moines des couvents Grecs de la Montagne se rendaient librement en Russie pour y solliciter des secours; maintenant l'entrée en Russie leur est formellement interdite, à moins qu'ils ne soient préalablement munis d'un permis de la Sainte Synode Russe; mais ce permis n'est jamais livré sans avoir d'abord consulté le Consul de Salonique, qui, à son tour, se base sur les renseignements du Père Jérôme. Or donc, les couvents, qui s'inclinent devant les demandes Russes soit pour la vente des terrains, scètes, &c., soit pour l'admission des moines Russes, ne sont pas trop tantalisés dans l'attente de ce permis, tandis que les couvents récalcitrants sont considérés toujours comme indignes de fouler le sol de la Sainte Russie. Ils profitent aussi des incendies qui ont lieu dans les couvents Grecs en s'offrant de reconstruire d'eux-mêmes la partie brûlée sous la condition toujours d'acquérir le droit d'entrée.

Ces incendies ont été si fréquents dans ces dernières années, et l'insistance des Russes à reconstruire à leurs frais si opiniâtre, que les Grecs sont devenus excessivement soupçonneux, tellement qu'ils vont jusqu'à attribuer ces incendies aux Russes eux-mêmes; et ils préfèrent de ne pas reconstruire du tout plutôt que d'être obligés d'admettre ces hommes dans leurs couvents. Mais même si ces soupçons sont sans fondement il est très-probable qu'à la fin tous les couvents qui ont brûlé en partie ou en entier tomberont au pouvoir des Russes, car ce sont eux seuls qui peuvent aujourd'hui disposer de moyens presque inépuisables pour l'érection de si grandes et coûteuses bâtisses.

Il y a cependant une chose qui pour le moment leur manque, et sans laquelle ils rencontreront presque toujours des obstacles sérieux dans l'accomplissement de leurs projets, et ceci c'est l'absence d'arsenaux spacieux sur la côte. Il n'y a que le "Couvent Russe" qui en a pour le moment, et pour en obtenir encore quelques autres, ils offrent des sommes fabuleuses, surtout la soi-disante Scète du Sérail. Si donc ils réussissent, comme il n'est pas improbable, à acheter les arsenaux du couvent Grec de Stavronikita, ils auront de quoi en faire construire des plus grands et des plus spacieux que ceux du "Couvent Russe." Ils auront de cette manière deux débarquadères sûres de chaque côté de la péninsule où les bateaux pourront débarquer leurs cargaisons de moines, pèlerins, donations, &c. Dans le cas aussi où leurs efforts continuels pour acquérir le Couvent de Koutloumoussi seraient couronnés de succès, alors ils se donneraient la main à travers la péninsule, c'est-à-dire, depuis le "Couvent Russe" jusqu'à celui de Stavronikita; car ils seront maîtres du centre de la Montagne, où se trouvent la Scète du Sérail et le Couvent de Koutloumoussi, et entre ces deux Karyas, où siégent les représentants de la communauté. Ceci est d'autant plus probable que le Couvent de Koutloumoussi a dernièrement brûlé deux fois, et par conséquent les moines, qui n'étaient jamais riches, manquent parfois de leur pain quotidien, sont à peine habillés, et se promènent pieds-nus. Ce couvent a réitérativement imploré la permission de quêter en Russie; mais ce permis lui a été carrément refusé, parceque ce couvent ne voulait pas admettre des moines Russes.

C'est depuis 1863 que les Russes intriguent pour se rendre maîtres de ce couvent, qui est presque le plus important de tous au point de vue stratégique, et ils auraient réussi si l'Ambassade Anglais n'intervenait pas pour protéger ces moines, qui étaient presque tous Ioniens.

L'influence dont le Père Jérôme jouit, en compagnie du Père Makarius, homme très-riche et rejeton, dit-on, d'une grande famille Russe, est si considérable, que l'on peut avec assurance dire, que ce sont ces deux hommes qui gouvernent aujourd'hui la Sainte Montagne; car la voix de cinq ou six couvents abritant des moines de la Grèce libérée, et qui sont les seuls qui protestent hautement contre les empiétements des Russes, ne suffit point pour contrecarrer leurs projets, vu que tous les autres ont peur d'agir ouvertement contre l'influence du Père Jérôme.

Ce personnage a su persuader aux moines du Mont Athos qu'il est un saint, et faire ébruiter la nouvelle dans toute la Russie; il est aussi considéré comme le levier des opérations Russes tant au Mont Athos qu'en Macédoine. Il est très positif, d'ailleurs, qu'il est en correspondance suivie avec nombre de personnes haute placées en Russie, et avec tous les cercles Panslavistes et Bulgares. Il a su, en outre, amasser une si grande fortune qu'il a l'intention d'acquérir en Macédoine des immeubles d'une valeur très-considérable, et a dans quelques banques Européennes des sommes immenses déposées.

Voici un exemple de la manière dont il s'est pris, pour impressionner les moines et pèlerins de ses pouvoirs surnaturels.

Il existe à Odessa, et je crois dans tous les ports de la Mer Noire et la Mer d'Azoff, des bureaux chargés du transport des pèlerins et des moines jusqu'au Mont Athos. Les employés de ces établissements, de concert avec Jérôme, obtiennent de ces simples et naïfs individus une esquisse historique de leurs familles, de leurs affaires, &c., tout en inscrivant leurs noms aux registres des bureaux. Jérôme reçoit dûment le catalogue dans lequel l'historique de chaque moine ou pèlerin est annoté à côté de son nom. En arrivant donc au Mont Athos, le Père Jérôme, tout en les appelant par leurs noms propres, commence à leur raconter des faits concernant leurs affaires, nommément à demander après chaque membre de la famille, et ainsi de suite, ce qui naturellement ne laisse que de les surprendre au plus haut dégré, et leur fait croire que Jérôme est évidemment plus qu'un homme.

Il a aussi mis à profit le bruit de sa sainteté pour écraser autant que possible les Grecs en racontant une révélation qui lui aurait été faite par Jésus Christ.

Il priait tout seul, dit-il, une nuit vers le tard, lorsqu'il vit une lueur resplendissante illuminer tout-à-coup sa cellule et apparaître au milieu de cette lueur le Sauveur lui-même, entouré de toutes les nations du monde, lui disant: "Que le Seigneur est content de lui." "J'en étais si stupéfait," dit-il, "que je n'ai pu proférer le mot; nonobstant j'ai remarqué que la Grèce se trouvait tout-à-fait au dernier rang, et à peine visible. Alors j'ai eu la hardiesse de lever mes yeux vers le Sauveur, et lui demander en quoi la Grèce, cette nation qui nous donna les lumières et la foi Chrétienne, aurait mérité le courroux du Seigneur pour qu'elle soit la dernière même après les païens. J'ai fait cette demande en tremblant, et le Sauveur me répondit avec un regard sévère, que toute nation qui conspirerait contre la Sainte Russie, ce berceau de la vraie foi, et hésiterait d'entrer dans ses vues, cette nation là s'attirerait le déplaisir divin et serait traitée de même; sur quoi une obscurité complète pénétra dans ma cellule, et je ne vis plus rien."

D'après toutes les apparences, le Père Jérôme, ainsi que les couvents Russes, jouissent de l'appui du Gouvernement Russe, et de ses Consuls de Salonique. Ces derniers se rendent au Mont Athos très-souvent, et notamment M. Léontiew, qui y demeura pendant huit mois, et qui ne faisait qu'errer de couvent en couvent, et de métochi en métochi, se rendant compte de tout, et se mêlant partout.

Il est excessivement surprenant pourtant, que tout ce va-et-vient n'ait point au moins excité la curiosité du Gouvernement Ottoman; il en a fallu expressément l'incident de Saint Paul, pour attirer enfin son attention sur les affaires du Mont Athos, et pour se demander, si par hasard les Russes ne cherchent pas à y établir le centre de leur propagande.

Cependant, si la Sainte Montagne est destinée à être sauvée des griffes Russes, ceci ne serait pas tant dû aux mesures que le Gouvernement Ottoman pourrait prendre, qu'à l'opposition plutôt tant ouverte que cachée des moines Grecs, et en particulier des moines Hellènes. Les Russes ont compris cela, et ils ont maintenant commencé à montrer ouvertement aux moines Grecs leur aversion, tandis que jusqu'à présent, ils les ménageaient plus ou moins; et il est curieux de voir avec quelle méfiance et avec quelle antipathie on voit au "Couvent Russe" les visiteurs Grecs, qu'ils soient moines ou non.

Cette aversion, qui croît de jour en jour, réciproquement d'ailleurs, et les violentes diatribes qui paraissent depuis quelques temps dans les journaux Grecs contre les agissements Russes, ont excité le Gouvernement Russe jusqu'au point de menacer les couvents Grecs, par l'entremise du Consul de Salonique, de confisquer les propriétés qui leur sont restées en Russie, s'ils ne démentissent officiellement les articles contre les projets Russes sur le Mont Athos, insérés dans les journaux Grecs de Constantinople, et s'ils ne déclarent hautement leur dévotion à la nation Russe, et leur amour fraternel pour les moines Russes du Mont Athos.

Ceci vient de se passer, il y a quinze jours, mais je ne suis pas encore en position de savoir l'effet que cette menace a pu produire au Mont Athos. Si l'on prend cependant en considération la pénurie extrême dans laquelle les couvents Grecs sont tombés depuis quelques années et que la seule ressource qui leur reste, sont justement ces propriétés menacées, il ne serait pas étonnant qu'ils pensent deux fois avant de rompre complètement avec une Puissance comme la Russie; d'autant plus qu'ils voient que la Porte ne peut ou ne veut pas les protéger. Les revenus annuels des couvents, provenant de ces propriétés, dépassent, je crois, les 60,000 livres.

No. 21.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 1.*)

(No. 499. Confidential.)

Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 464 of 16th instant, I informed your Lordship that I had consented, at the Sultan's request, to write a letter to Said Pasha, the head of His Majesty's military household, stating my views as to the amnesty to be given to the imprisoned Bulgarians, and my consent to certain conditions which His Majesty desired to attach to it. I have the honour to inclose a copy of the letter which I addressed to his Excellency.

Mr. Blunt came to Constantinople on the 19th instant, and I placed him at once in communication with Said Pasha and the Grand Vizier, to whom I had also spoken very strongly on the subject of the amnesty, calling upon him to fulfil the promises that he had repeatedly given to me to recommend the Sultan to issue it without delay.

I inclose a copy of Mr. Blunt's report to me of what passed between himself and the Grand Vizier and Said Pasha in the matter. He will leave Constantinople to-morrow or next day, and I have now every reason to hope that the amnesty will be issued at once; but your Lordship will be able to judge, by my despatches on this subject, of the difficulties that I have experienced, from various causes, in obtaining it.

I think that the conditions made by the Sultan are fair, and cannot be complained of if justly carried out. There is no doubt that amongst the imprisoned Bulgarians there are a few who have been properly condemned for crimes of a grave nature. Mr. Baring, who is perfectly well acquainted with all that has taken place, fully admits that such is the case. Others are dangerous characters whom the Porte could not be fairly called upon to set free unconditionally. The main thing is to see that the innocent be not confounded with the guilty, and that the amnesty be as wide and general as circumstances will admit.

I have instructed Mr. Blunt, in whom I have full confidence, to see that such should be the case, and I trust that a large number of persons will receive their complete liberty.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 21.

Mr. Layard to Said Pasha.

(Private.)

Therapia, May 16, 1877.

Excellency,

THE Sultan was good enough to state to me yesterday that he would grant an amnesty to the Bulgarian prisoners, on condition that those who had been proved guilty of grave crimes should be excepted, and that those who are considered men dangerous to the public peace and order should be placed under proper surveillance. The conditions made by His Imperial Majesty are just and reasonable, and such as are required for the public safety. I only ventured to submit to His Imperial Majesty that care should be taken not to confound the innocent with the guilty, and that, while all necessary precautions are taken to prevent really dangerous men from being at large without restraint, the humane and generous measures which the Sultan has promised to take without delay should be as extensive and complete as possible. To ensure that such should be the case, I proposed to His Majesty that I should name a strictly confidential agent, who should come to an understanding with the authorities who are charged with carrying the amnesty into effect as to the persons who are to be included within the above-mentioned conditions. I named Mr. Blunt, Her Majesty's Consul at Salonica, now at Adrianople, as a gentleman whose well-known impartiality and friendly feelings towards Turkey gave a guarantee that he would execute this duty in a just and satisfactory manner.

I would further venture to suggest that the Bulgarians exiled to the provinces, or some of them, at least, should, if possible, be included in the amnesty. I had the honour of placing in your Excellency's hands a list of them.

The humane and generous resolution taken by the Sultan to amnesty such of his

Bulgarian subjects as were implicated in the unfortunate events of last year cannot but increase the affection and devotion to His Majesty of the Christian populations of the Empire, and will produce the most favourable impression on public opinion in England and elsewhere. It cannot, I am convinced, have any evil results, and the precautions which His Majesty proposes to adopt will prevent that which is promoted by the most just and beneficent motives from being prejudicial to the public safety.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 2 in No. 21.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Therapia, May 22, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the result of the communications which, in pursuance with your Excellency's instructions, I have had with Said Pasha, head of the Sultan's household, on the subject of the Bulgarian amnesty.

I waited on Said Pasha on the 18th instant, the day after my arrival here, and delivered to him the private letter which your Excellency addressed to him on the subject of my visit. After reading it he assured me that His Majesty was determined to issue the amnesty, but that he felt that it would not be safe, in the present state of war, to set at large, without exceptions and conditions, a large number of persons who have taken an active part, as Slav agents, in the late disturbances in Bulgaria, and some of whom have been convicted of serious outrages; and that upon these considerations, which could not be neglected with prudence or propriety, it was thought desirable that the Imperial Commissioner who will have to carry out the amnesty, should be instructed to draw some division and distinctions between the different classes of criminals and those prisoners whose unconditional release would not cause embarrassment or eventual danger to the Government and the internal tranquillity of Roumelia. His Excellency then went on to say, that with the exception of thirteen Bulgarians and Turks who have been condemned to death, all the persons now detained in prison for their proved or suspected complicity in the late events, would be released on the following conditions:—

1st Class.—Unconditional release, with no restraint whatever.

2nd Class.—Release, with the right to remain in their districts under police surveillance.

3rd Class.—Release, but removal from the late disturbed districts to other parts of the Empire appointed for their residence; to be under the inspection of the police, and to receive rations from the Government.

Said Pasha added that it was the Sultan's firm resolve that, at the termination of hostilities, all those included in the 2nd and 3rd categories should be immediately released from the surveillance of the police. With respect to the thirteen condemned criminals, their penalty will be commuted to deportation and hard labour.

The Pasha also approved of my suggestion that Ali Pasha, the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Adrianople, should be entrusted with the execution of the amnesty, and gave me to understand that he would mention his name to the Grand Vizier.

I have also communicated on the subject of this amnesty with the Grand Vizier, and what his Highness told me, on the two occasions I waited on him, coincided with the Sultan's existing opinion and intentions, as explained to me by Said Pasha.

His Highness also approved of Ali Pasha being charged with the execution of the amnesty, on the conditions I have stated, and promised to furnish me with a letter to him, informing him that it had been arranged I should consult with him confidentially with regard to the persons who are to be released unconditionally or not, under the provisions of the amnesty.

Both Said Pasha and the Grand Vizier appeared anxious that my communications with Ali Pasha in this connection should be conducted confidentially, and alluded in flattering terms to the confidence your Excellency has kindly honoured me with. I told them both that your Excellency had recommended to me the strictest secrecy.

On the 20th instant I received the Grand Vizier's letter for Ali Pasha, and during the interview I had with him on the 21st he requested me to inform your Excellency that the Imperial Rescript for the amnesty will shortly be issued, the

Porte having submitted to the Sultan for his approval the necessary application for this act of grace.

In conclusion I beg leave to report to your Excellency that in my several interviews with Said Pasha and the Grand Vizier, I tried to impress upon them, governed as I was by your Excellency's instructions, the great importance of not losing any time in carrying out the amnesty which your Excellency had recommended to the Sultan; and I brought under their consideration all the good that would result from making this measure as general and complete as possible, pointing out to them how this will tend to heal the divisions which the late occurrences unavoidably must have occasioned in Roumelia, and at the same time satisfy public opinion in England, which is still more or less affected and agitated by these occurrences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 22.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 500. Confidential.)
Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I ASKED my Austro-Hungarian colleague yesterday whether he had any trustworthy information as to intentions of the Servian Government with regard to Turkey and whether the reports as to the concentration of Servian troops on the Turkish frontier with the object of attacking her were, in his opinion, well founded.

His Excellency replied that the Porte had expressed to him its apprehension that Servia was preparing for hostilities, and knowing the weak and restless character of Prince Milan, he should not be surprised at anything he might be induced to do; but, after the assurances which his Government had received from that of Russia, he could not believe that the Prince would have any assistance or encouragement from that quarter. I observed to his Excellency that, from the reports which I had received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Belgrade, Prince Milan had apparently sent one of his relatives to the Emperor to induce His Majesty to call upon the Servians to invade Turkey, and that His Majesty had not only given him no encouragement, but had advised him not to go to war with the Turks again; but, notwithstanding this warning, I understood that Prince Milan was still attempting to prevail upon the Emperor to sanction an attack on the part of Servia upon Turkish territory.

Count Zichy remarked that he heard with great pleasure that the Emperor of Russia had taken a course which would give much satisfaction to his Government. Prince Milan, he observed, was playing a very dangerous game, and if he persisted in it he would have to count with Austria, and would, in all probability, lose his throne. But, added his Excellency, if Karageorgewitch were to succeed him, we should have the red republic in Servia, and that would never do. Count Zichy did not mention what the alternative might be should Prince Milan be deposed; but his Excellency evidently pointed to an Austrian occupation of the Principality.

I further asked Count Zichy whether he thought there was any probability of the Russians crossing the Danube into Servian territory if, in consequence of the extraordinary rise of the river, they found serious obstacles to its passage lower down. His Excellency replied that, from the information which he had received from the Austro-Hungarian authorities, he believed that, even if unopposed, the Russians could not cross the Danube, either in Servian waters or elsewhere, at the present time, or probably for a month to come. The volume of the water and the rapidity of the stream were so great that no pontoon bridge for the passage of an army could be constructed across the river.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 23.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 501.)
Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

AFTER I had written my despatch No. of this date, I had a visit from the Servian Agent, M. Christich, who showed me a telegram which he had just received from the Servian Prime Minister, and had communicated this morning to Safvet Pasha. In it M. Ristich gave the most positive assurances that the Servian Government did not contemplate any attack upon Turkey; and that so far from any troops having been concentrated on the Turkish frontier with this object, "there was not in the whole Principality a band of more than five men together."

M. Christich said that the Grand Vizier had informed him that the Porte had received information that Russian troops were beginning to arrive at Turn-Severin, opposite Gladova, exactly where the Russian volunteers had crossed last year into Servia, and that there are therefore strong grounds for suspecting that, notwithstanding the assurances given by Russia to Austria, she intended to pass an army into Servia. M. Christich added that he had assured the Grand Vizier that the Servian Government had no reason whatever to believe that Russia intended to cross the Danube into Servia; but that, on the contrary, they were convinced that she had no such intention. He then told me, "most confidentially and not for the Blue Book," that the Russian Consul-General at Belgrade had been inciting Prince Milan and his Government to make war on Turkey; but that he had reason to know that the Emperor of Russia disapproved of his Agent's proceedings, and had recalled him. The Russian Consul-General, M. Christich said, was a member of the secret directing Committee of the Omladina, and his proceedings in Servia had been "diabolical." Whilst pretending to carry out his instructions and communicating them to the Servian Government, he had told them, on the other hand, not to attach any importance to them, and had constantly urged the Servians to war.

I thought the opportunity a good one to speak to M. Christich of the great danger that Prince Milan was running if he were following the counsels of the Russian Consul-General, and were to plunge the Principality again into war; and I hinted to him that His Highness might have to deal with Austria as well as Russia.

M. Christich said that he was entirely of my opinion; that he had warned M. Ristich of this, and would warn him again; but that the influence of the Omladina party in Servia was almost too strong for the Prince Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 24.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 1.)

(No. 502.)
Therapia, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt respecting Circassian excesses in the district of Enos, which had been reported by the British Vice-Consul at that place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, May 23, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received the following telegram from Mr. Calvert at Adrianople, dated yesterday:—

"Vice-Consul at Enos reports telegraphically Circassian outrages. Says he has also reported to Embassy.

"Governor-General tells me he has just received report from Governor of Keshan stating one person killed by Circassians, but country in general remarkably quiet. Governor-General has telegraphed to Governor of Enos for information. Will communicate reply as soon as received."

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 25.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 55.) *Tehran, April 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith translation of a memorandum communicated to me by the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs, which embodies the grievances of the Persian Government against that of Turkey, and which he begged me to forward to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

Inclosure in No. 25.

Proposed Draft of a Letter from the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(Translation.)

I HAVE understood the purport and contents of Lord Derby's despatch, which your Excellency read to me, and beg to state most respectfully that the Persian Government has always honoured and appreciated the true friendship of England, and it has, on every occasion, listened with hearty good will to the kind advice of that Government. It has always, and still desires, to preserve and perpetuate this satisfactory attitude of the British Government towards itself, and it has always used, and will continue to use on every occasion, its best endeavours, with the view of attaining that object.

Respecting Persia's intentions towards Turkey at the present critical moment, as set forth by his Lordship, this fact is clear, that Persia is assuredly most anxious to insure its main object, namely, the satisfaction of the British Government, by showing its friendship and good will towards a Government which is its neighbour and its co-religionist; and at the present time she entertains no ill-feeling towards the Turkish Government, nor any desire to separate from it. But as Lord Derby had made those statements out of pure friendship and good will towards both parties, it becomes necessary briefly to bring some of the unjust proceedings and want of respect of the Turkish Government to the manifest rights of the Persian Government to the knowledge of his Lordship. For instance, the Turkish Government openly took unjust possession of the valley of Kotoor, which is Persian territory, at a time when the Commissioners of the four Powers were engaged in surveying and inspecting the Turco-Persian frontier; notwithstanding that Generals Williams and Tchornakoff, the Commissioners of the Mediating Powers, distinctly asserted the justice of the Persian and the injustice of the Turkish claim, in documents which are at present extant, and that Persia claimed the said territory both directly and indirectly, it has not been given up. In like manner she has unjustly taken possession of the valleys of Banzergan, Doiree, Mahmoodee, Ankhoorek, Chibookloo, and Khanzenauh, which form an integral part of Persian territory, and has not returned them up to the present time. No Government has so much patience and forbearance in such cases as that of Persia, who sees her territory wrongfully annexed by another Government, and, notwithstanding her constant demands, is unable to obtain its restitution, yet makes no change in feelings of friendship. Again, their ill-treatment of the Persian subjects in Turkish dominions generally, and of the pilgrims particularly, prevails to such an extent that it passes all description in writing. The best evidence in this case is that, notwithstanding that provision has been made for paying due regard and respect to the privileges of Persian pilgrims in the Turco-Persian Treaty, and that a pilgrimage to the holy places of Kerbela, Nejjef, Medina, Mecca, &c., is one of the highest duties of Islam, and no one can find himself debarred from such pilgrimages; yet the Persian pilgrims were so badly treated in Turkish territory, and such disrespect was shown to their rights and the terms of the Treaty, that the Persian Government became the object of reproach of its own people. For a period of many years the Persian Government urgently begged that the pilgrims should have a safeguard, but that request had no effect whatever, but rather their proceedings reached such a pitch that the life, property, honour, and families of Persian pilgrims were endangered in Turkey. At last the Persian Government, seeing that no result was produced by their persistent demands, but that a contrary effect ensued, and not wishing to make a change in its friendship and amity with the Turkish Government, and desiring to

maintain her friendly relations with it, was obliged to prohibit Persian subjects from making pilgrimages, and it is now four years since they have been entirely precluded from going on pilgrimages. During this period also, however, the Persian Government has urgently and persistingly begged that some arrangement should be made respecting the safety and respect paid to pilgrims; no co-operation or steps whatever have been adopted by the Ottoman Government.

Again, the Persian Government requested that of Turkey to remove Abbas Mirza from Bagdad to Damascus or Aleppo. The Sublime Porte also notified the acceptance of the same officially and in writing, and also went through the form of sending two or three telegrams to the Pashalik of Bagdad. It is now seven months since they have delayed to fulfil this slight request of the Persian Government, and now they repudiate their promise and agreement. The affair of killing and wounding the Persian pilgrims, both male and female, at Medina, and plundering their property, which the newspapers of the whole of Europe, Turkey, and Persia mention with regret, and which has recently occured, has placed a fresh load upon the Persian nation and Government, and has given an amount of pain to the Persian people, and in fact, to any person, of whatever nationality he may be, that it is quite inconceivable.

There are so many instances and cases of this kind that, were I to enumerate them, this paper would not contain them, and, moreover, they would be a source of annoyance to your Excellency.

Moreover, it is near forty years that they have delayed the question of the delineation of the frontiers of the two countries; and, notwithstanding the stringent measures adopted by the Persian Government, their urgent demands for the settlement of this matter, which would ensure peace to both parties, the despatch of Special Agents, and the fact, too, that the high mediating Powers are also engaged with this question, the Ottoman Government will take no steps whatever in the matter, but only procrastinate.

Your Excellency must feel fully convinced that the Persian Government is ready to listen to the kind advice of the British Government, and desirous to increase daily its friendships with Turkey. If the British Government, who are well-wishers towards both parties in accordance with their lofty and benevolent sentiments, desire that hearty and true friendship should exist between these two Governments, it is suitable that, in the excess of their benevolence, they should exert their friendly endeavours to give advice to the Turkish Government, so as to induce them to arrange these points, viz.: to restore the Persian territory of which she has taken unjust possession, and to make arrangements for the settlement of the delineation of the boundaries according to the line of frontier at present possessed by both parties; to provide for the safety of the pilgrims, to remove Abbas Mirza to Damascus or Aleppo, as distinctly and officially promised, and to render suitable reparation and satisfaction for the deplorable occurrence at Medina, in which case, without doubt, sincere and hearty friendship will continue for ever.

It is clear to your Excellency's sense of justice that, for the recovery of a patient, it is necessary for the physician to eradicate the disease, so that he may gain the use of his limbs; for, if he were required to walk without any attempt to cure him, and he does so, he will again fall, owing to his diseases.

Although the Persian Government heartily endeavours and exerts herself to carry out the advice given by the British Government, yet, so long as these questions remain unsettled, and the disease is uncured, she will always be unable to resist the demands of her people, and find herself accordingly involved in embarrassments.

No. 26.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 15. Political.) *Adrianople, May 16, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis' report on the condition of Kirk-Kilissé, just visited by him. Your Lordship will observe that in each of the four cases of outrage in that district investigated by Mr. Dupuis the Turkish authorities have promptly imprisoned the offenders.

The Circassians continue to give trouble, but, upon the whole, rather less than usual. With reference to the cases reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Brophy, of Bourgas,

and mentioned in my despatch to your Lordship No. 13 of the 12th instant, the following particulars, which have been furnished to me by the Vali, regarding one of them, serve to prove the truth of what has often been asserted, that Christian evil-doers sometimes avail themselves of the bad repute in which that people stand, and disguise themselves as Circassians, as a convenient cloak for their crimes:—

On the 27th ultimo three persons, one of them dressed as a Circassian, forcibly entered the house of one Nicola, a Bulgarian, residing at the village of Kellesh, in the Sandjak of Bourgas. Each fired a shot in succession at Nicola, whom they left mortally wounded. Before his death, however, he was able to make a deposition, which was taken down by the Kaïmakam of the district in the presence of many of the villagers. The victim stated that he had recognized two of the assassins, the one in Circassian costume being a Bulgarian and a personal enemy, named Dimitri, a native of Bourgas. The Kaïmakam succeeded in immediately tracking all the three murderers to a neighbouring village, where they were arrested, with the blood of the victim yet on their clothes.

As regards the Pomak outrage at Palaskioï, reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, and referred to in my despatches to your Lordship No. 11 of the 8th instant, and No. 13 of the 12th instant, the fugitive offenders do not appear to have been yet apprehended; but the following facts have in the meanwhile been established from a preliminary examination of the complainants, all of whom have now turned up:—The Vali informs me that the Mutessarif has reported to his Excellency that the individuals alleged to have been stabbed were subjected to medical examination, and no wounds were found on them. This statement is borne out by that made to Mr. Calvert by the Primate of Boïkovo, according to whom, although several of the party were severely beaten, none were stabbed. Another circumstance which materially alters the aspect of the case as at first reported is that among the cattle identified as their own at Palaskioï by the Bulgarians of Boïkovo there were but ten goats in Mahommedan hands (those of one Mollah Suleïman Ibrahim), whilst there were three oxen and one donkey in the possession of a Christian named Athanase Gaïdadji, and two oxen in that of another Christian named Doulabdji. Palaskioï, as already stated, is a mixed Christian and Pomak village; but the great majority of inhabitants, Mr. Calvert says, belong to the former faith; and, according to the report received by the Vali, besides the cattle claimed by the people of Boïkovo, a great many more head of plundered stock from the villages destroyed last year are in the hands of the Christians of Palaskioï. It remains to be seen, therefore, whether, besides the Mussulmans who are accused, the Christians of Palaskioï did or did not also take part in the attack. In any case, as the Vali has justly remarked to me, it is clear that the party from Boïkovo were out of order in asserting their right to the cattle without the aid and concurrence of the Government authorities. According to the information received by his Excellency, they took this course towards other villages besides Palaskioï during the same excursion, putting forward their demands in an arbitrary and high-handed fashion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 26.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, May 16, 1877.

Sir,

HAVING just visited the important town of Kirk-Klissia, and the neighbouring villages of Issikendékeuy, Hasskeuy, and Yenidge, in consequence of outrages reported to have been committed by Mussulmans on Christians, I have the honour to inform you that I have investigated four occurrences of that nature, and that I have seen and spoken with the sufferers by those acts of violence.

On the 6th instant, it appears that Mihailoglu Theodori, a Bulgarian inhabitant of Kirk-Klissia, while conveying a cartload of wine, was accosted at a place called Sheytanderé by a Turk, a stranger to him, but also of Kirk-Klissia, named Kadir, who, after giving the road salutation, demanded of him a drink. Having been served with some wine, Kadir drew out his knife and flourished it in the face of Theodori. The latter, thinking he was going to be killed, grasped hold of the knife, and cut his

fingers; the former then seizing the gun of the Bulgarian, which was slung on his back, with it shot him in the groins, and inflicted a bad wound.

The Bulgarian is now being medically treated by the authorities, while his would-be assassin has been lodged in prison.

On the 11th, Sali Aga, another Turk, violently assaulted and severely belaboured a Greek Rayah, named Theodossoglu Dimitri, of Laïegi, because the latter encroached on a corn-field with his cart to make way for the former, who was approaching in an opposite direction. Dimitri is now laid up in hospital, his back presenting one mass of discolorations. He is also receiving medical care at the hands of the authorities. The author of this outrage is likewise in prison.

About the same time, Karagueshoglu Theologos, a Christian of Kirk-Klissia, having been maltreated and beaten by a certain Uzun Ismaïl, of the same place, was lodged in prison by the authorities.

It likewise came to my knowledge, and was subsequently confirmed by the Kaïmakam of Kirk-Klissia, that Kristaki, the son of the Sanduk Eminé (Local Treasurer), a Christian, having been wounded in the face and eyes by Kraï Mehemet, the assailant suffered eight days' imprisonment.

While at Kirk-Klissia, I was shown three Circassian bandits, two of whom, for resisting the forces sent to arrest them for depredations committed, had been fired at and wounded by the zaptiehs; the third was in irons.

Apart from the above irregularities, I beg to state that I was very favourably impressed with the aspect of things in general in the district I visited, and with the enthusiasm of the Christians as well Mussulmans, for the war with Russia in particular, and the beating up for volunteers.

As to the presence of emissaries, I cannot speak positively; there is a certain Polemini Alexopulos, a Russian subject, in Kirk-Klissia, a baker by trade, who calls himself the Vekil of some twenty Russian subjects, and holds a seal of office for transacting business, but I do not think any importance can be attached to anything he may say or do.

On the other hand, there is a certain Ali Peklevan, a Turk of well-known infamous notoriety, whose presence in that part of the country is a source of constant fear and dread to peaceable people. He should be removed from that locality, or he may yet give cause of trouble to the Turkish authorities.

I do not wish to trouble you with further cases of cattle-liftings and pillerings by the Circassians, and will only mention one instance.

Messrs. Vassilatli, Vergene, and Catapothi, Greek merchants in this city, some six weeks ago sent to their correspondent in Kirk-Klissia, a group containing 10,000 piastres in caimés, which was robbed on the way, but up to this date no traces of the robbery have been discovered.

I may remark, in conclusion, that many of the principal residents in Kirk-Klissia spoke in terms of commendation of Nazif Bey, the Kaïmakam, and, judging from my short acquaintance, I should say he appeared an energetic official, and one anxious to do his duty to his Government, as I think I have shown in this report, but there was a rumour that he was to be removed from his post, which unsettles him, and greatly interferes with his plans of carrying out his duties.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 27.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 16. Political.)

Adrianople, May 16, 1877.

My Lord,

SINCE closing my despatch to your Lordship No. 15 of to-day's date, I have seen the Greek Archbishop of Adrianople, who has just returned from a diocesan tour of a month's duration, in the course of which his Eminence visited some thirty villages.

The Archbishop tells me that he found an excellent spirit to prevail everywhere as between Mussulmans and Christians, the friendliness displayed by the former being met by a corresponding spirit of confidence on the part of the latter. Wherever the Archbishop had occasion to pass through a Mussulman place he was well received, the Turkish Mollahs and Elders going out to welcome his Eminence, and accompanying him on his departure, with every mark of good will and respect.

I told the Archbishop that I would, with his permission, report what he had related to me, and his Eminence at once replied emphatically that it would give him the greatest pleasure if I did so.

The above testimony is the more valuable as coming from a Prelate (Dionysius) who is noted for the independence of his character, of which he has given proofs in several differences which he has had with the provincial authorities in this vilayet, and I believe also in Crete.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 28.

Count Andrassy to Count Zichy.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Beust, June 1.)

Vienne, le 22 Mai, 1877.

LE Baron Herbert nous a communiqué par son rapport du 1er courant les ordonnances que la Porte a publiées lors de l'ouverture des hostilités au sujet de la navigation dans le Bosphore, dans les Dardanelles, et sur le Danube.

Par son rapport du 4 courant M. le Chargé d'Affaires a porté à notre connaissance la notification Turque du blocus ainsi que les règlements émanés de la Porte au sujet des navires Russes et du commerce des neutres. Enfin, par son rapport du 11 courant, le Baron Herbert nous a informé de la Proclamation du Serdar-i-Ekrem relativement à la défense de la navigation sur le Danube et nous a transmis copie des notes qu'il s'était vu obligé d'adresser à la Porte pour sauvegarder nos droits en tant qu'ils paraissent lésés par les ordonnances de la Porte et de leurs autorités militaires.

Les principes de la libre navigation sur le Danube sanctionnés par les Traités de 1856 et de 1871, et placés sous la garantie du droit public Européen, touche de près aux intérêts les plus vitaux de la monarchie Austro-Hongroise, et nous sommes décidés à les défendre. Nous avons clairement défini nos principes dans notre dépêche adressée au Baron Herbert en date du 6 courant et exprimé l'espoir qu'ils seront respectés dans toute leur étendue par les deux parties combattantes.

J'ai communiqué à votre Excellence, par ma dépêche du 20 courant, que le Gouvernement Russe s'est empressé d'adhérer à nos principes à ce sujet, et qu'il nous a donné des assurances les plus formelles relativement à la libre navigation sur le Danube et aux mesures provisoires que les événements de la guerre avaient rendu nécessaires.

Le Gouvernement Turc ne nous a jusqu'ici fait parvenir aucune communication à ce sujet.

Tout en attendant les déclarations de la Porte, nous croyons devoir d'avance appeler l'attention de votre Excellence sur les règlements publiés par le Gouvernement Turc par rapport à la navigation sur le Danube et de relever les points qui à notre avis ne sont pas en accord avec les stipulations internationales en vigueur, et qui constituent une infraction à nos droits contre laquelle nous sommes obligés de protester énergiquement.

Avant tout nous ne pouvons admettre que la Turquie considère le Danube comme sa ligne de défense et qu'elle le désigne comme telle.

Le Danube est en première ligne une voie de communication fluviale ouverte à tous les pavillons marchands, et personne ne peut s'arroger le droit d'entraver la libre communication sur cette voie en tant qu'elle se rapporte au commerce. Nous ne contestons pas les droits de souveraineté territoriale que la Porte peut faire valoir comme Puissance riveraine dans les limites tracées par les Traités à l'égard de l'appartenance de ce fleuve; mais la liberté de navigation sur le Danube est garantie par les Traités, et la prétention de la Porte de considérer le Danube comme sa ligne de défense et de vouloir y statuer des règlements selon son bon plaisir, nous paraît être en contradiction directe avec la liberté de navigation placée sous la garantie du droit public Européen, et pourrait en tout cas donner lieu à une interprétation erronée des droits de souveraineté qu'il lui appartient d'exercer sur l'appartenance de ce fleuve. Cette prétention nous paraît surtout incompatible avec les stipulations des Traités en vigueur à l'égard des travaux de la Commission du Danube dont la neutralité a été expressément déclarée par l'Article VII du Traité du 13 Mars, 1871, conformément aux stipulations de l'Acte public du 2 Novembre, 1865, de sorte que ces travaux doivent même en cas de guerre être respectés sans restriction par les parties combattantes et ne peuvent par conséquent jamais être compris dans leur ligne de défense.

C'est pour le cas de guerre précisément que cette neutralité a été stipulée. Nous devons donc péremptoirement protester contre cette manière de voir de la Porte par rapport au Danube ainsi que contre toutes les conséquences qui pourraient être déduites de cette interprétation et qui seraient contraires aux stipulations internationales et aux principes de la liberté du commerce et de la navigation sur le Danube. Vous êtes chargé de porter cette protestation de la manière la plus formelle à la connaissance de la Porte.

Tout en faisant ces réserves explicites quant à nos droits nous ne méconnaissons pas la situation exceptionnelle créée par la guerre qui a éclaté entre la Russie et la Turquie, et nous sommes disposés à prendre dûment en considération les conséquences qui en résultent nécessairement. La partie inférieure du Danube est actuellement devenue le théâtre de la guerre et nous ne nous refusons pas à reconnaître l'obligation qui nous est imposée comme Puissance neutre à ne pas entraver les opérations légitimes des Puissances belligérantes. Nous ne voulons donc pas réclamer contre l'interruption et la restriction du commerce et de la navigation des neutres sur le Bas-Danube qui résultent inévitablement des opérations militaires, mais nous sommes en droit de demander que dès que les opérations militaires immédiates le long de ce fleuve ne nécessitent plus impérieusement ces mesures exceptionnelles, aucune entrave ne soit plus mise à la libre navigation sur son parcours. De même nous devons demander que ces restrictions ne soient pas étendues au delà de l'empêchement réel, qu'on n'en prolonge pas la durée plus qu'il n'est absolument nécessaire, et que toutes ces entraves, quel qu'en soit le genre, soient en son temps entièrement éloignées.

En outre nous devons insister sur la demande que la propriété de nos nationaux sur le Danube, ainsi que dans les ports de ce fleuve, s'il n'a pas été possible de la faire sortir avant l'ouverture des hostilités et avant la publication des mesures ordonnées par les belligérants, soit respectée selon les principes du droit des gens généralement adoptés.

La propriété des neutres sur terre comme sur mer est placée sous la sauvegarde du droit des gens, et il nous paraît tout-à-fait inadmissible de vouloir priver de cet avantage la propriété de nos nationaux dans les ports du Danube. De même nous ne pouvons admettre qu'il y ait une différence sensible entre la navigation sur un fleuve international tel que le Danube et la navigation sur la mer par rapport à l'application des règles du droit maritime formulées par la Déclaration de Paris du 16 Avril, 1856. C'est avec le même droit que les navires portent leur pavillon national sur le Danube comme sur la mer. Souvent ce sont même des navires maritimes qui naviguent sur le Bas-Danube. Les règlements qui régissent la navigation sur le Bas-Danube sont conforme dans tous les points essentiels à ceux qui sont en vigueur par rapport à la navigation maritime. De même que personne ne voudra prétendre que les règles de la Déclaration de Paris ne peuvent être appliquées à un navire neutre et à sa cargaison dans le port maritime d'une Puissance belligérante malgré qu'elle ait, en vertu de ses droits territoriaux sur toutes les eaux de son littoral et sur tous les ports, un droit de souveraineté bien plus illimité que celui dont la Porte jouit par rapport au Danube, de même la prétention de la Porte que ces règles ne pouvaient pas être appliquées aux ports du Danube ne nous paraît nullement fondée.

A notre avis la Porte a dépassé de beaucoup les limites du droit des belligérants et a lésé les droits des neutres en général, et en particulier ceux qui leur sont garantis sur le Danube en s'en remettant au jugement du Serdar-i-Ekrem, dans les instructions qu'elle lui a adressées, et en lui donnant plein pouvoir de défendre à son gré la navigation sur le Danube, de saisir les vaisseaux contre une indemnité, et d'en disposer à volonté en les menaçant des punitions les plus sévères. Mais si le Commandant-en-chef des armées Turques, en suivant ces instructions, va jusqu'à défendre la navigation sur tout le parcours du Danube aussi loin que le rivage Turc est baigné par ses eaux, sans distinction, si la navigation y est réellement interrompue par suite des opérations militaires, ou si elle ne l'est pas de fait, s'il menace tous ceux qui transgressent cette défense des peines statuées en temps de guerre contre l'espionage, et s'il annonce la saisie et la confiscation de tous les navires, surpris en contravention, avec leur cargaison, n'exceptant que la cargaison des navires qui ont été retenus dans les ports du Danube jusqu'au $\frac{28}{16}\frac{\text{Avril}}{\text{Mai}}$, nous devons considérer ces dispositions comme une violation flagrante de tous les principes du droit des gens et de nos droits comme Puissance neutre que nous ne saurions tolérer. Si de plus l'action du Commandant-en-chef Turc se manifeste en même temps par la saisie des navires neutres se trouvant dans les ports sur la rive gauche du Danube, il nous devient impossible de méconnaître que ces mesures sont de nature à créer une situation aussi grave qu'illégale, que justifie de notre part les réclamations les plus sérieuses.

Veuillez exposer à la Porte cet état de choses d'une manière claire et précise, et demander un prompt redressement de nos griefs, et qu'il soit tenu compte de nos réclamations légitimes.

Par rapport à la libre navigation sur le Danube en général, nous attendons de la part de la Porte qu'elle nous donne des assurances aussi positives que celles qui nous ont été données par la Russie. Comme nous ne voulons pas entraver les opérations des belligérants sur le Danube, et que nous avons exigé de tous les capitaines des navires Austro-Hongrois, ainsi que de tous nos nationaux en général, qu'ils se conforment aux principes et aux règlements du droit des gens relativement au commerce des neutres avec les Puissances belligérantes, nous pouvons également exiger de la Porte qu'elle se conforme de même strictement à ces principes, et qu'elle respecte nos droits comme Puissance neutre. Un navire Austro-Hongrois qui se trouve dans un port du Danube ne peut être ni confisqué ni saisi à moins qu'il n'ait violé les principes du droit des gens par le transport de troupes, d'armes ou d'autre contrebande de guerre. Nous sommes également en droit d'exiger que la propriété de nos nationaux qui se trouve sur ces navires soit respectée d'une manière absolue, et nous réclamons en vertu du droit des gens la protection des autorités locales en faveur de nos nationaux et de leur propriété, ainsi que l'inviolabilité de nos droits garantis par les Traités.

Nous prétendons qu'on indemnise nos nationaux entièrement de tout dommage qu'ils éprouveront relativement à leur propriété par suite des réquisitions de tout genre soient qu'elles aient été ordonnés sans nécessité par les autorités militaires et civiles Turques, soit qu'elles aient été représentées comme un droit de préemption, et comme conséquence inévitable de l'état de guerre, ainsi que de tout autre préjudice porté aux intérêts de nos nationaux par la faute de ces autorités.

Finalement, il nous faut encore appuyer sur les devoirs imposés aux Puissances belligérantes par rapport à la neutralité formulée par le Traité de Londres de l'année 1871, à l'égard des travaux exécutés, et des établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube à l'embouchure de ce fleuve, ainsi qu'à l'égard du service administratif et technique de cette Commission, et auxquels en aucun cas il ne doit être porté atteinte par les opérations militaires.

La manière de voir de la Porte au sujet de cette question dont nous avons été informés par un télégramme du Baron Herbert du 10 courant, n'a pas manqué d'éveiller chez nous de sérieuses appréhensions que nous ne voulons pas cacher.

Si les travaux de cette Commission par suite de leur neutralisation doivent être exclus du rayon de toute opération militaire, l'opinion de la Porte, d'après laquelle la Commission serait obligée de subir le cours des événements de la guerre comme une force majeure, ne nous paraît nullement fondée, tant que l'intention d'une des Puissances belligérantes est manifeste de respecter cette neutralité.

Nous attachons un grand prix à recevoir de la part de la Porte des assurances satisfaisantes à ce sujet.

Le refus de la Porte de reconnaître le pavillon des signaux de la Commission Européenne du Danube comme marque distinctive pour ses bateaux et ses établissements, ne nous paraît pas non plus justifié.

Un besoin impérieux parle en tout cas en faveur de la reconnaissance de ce pavillon comme marque distinctive au moins pendant la durée de la guerre, car si l'on hissait le pavillon Ottoman on compromettrait par là dans les circonstances actuelles le caractère neutre de ces bateaux et de ces établissements. Ces signaux ne sont pas nouveaux, et on s'en est toujours servi comme marque distinctive.

En prétendant que la Commission Européenne du Danube hisse le pavillon Ottoman, la Porte réclame un droit qui ne lui appartient pas, et qui a déjà fait l'objet de contestations directes. Le caractère éminemment international de cette Commission ne permet pas de la placer sous la souveraineté Turque, mais en revanche les droits territoriaux de la Porte ne sauraient en aucune façon être lésés par ce pavillon de signal.

Ce signal ne représente aucune Puissance étrangère, et si par exemple on a adopté, par suite de la Convention de Genève, la croix rouge comme marque distinctive et comme sauvegarde contre les périls de la guerre sans que personne n'ait objecté que la croix rouge est en même temps le drapeau de la Confédération Helvétique, ces objections de la Porte au sujet de ce pavillon paraissent d'autant plus n'avoir aucune raison d'être, ce signal n'étant qu'une marque distinctive indispensable, et nous aimons à croire que la Porte voudra bien modifier en conséquence la Note Circulaire qui traite de cette question.

Nous espérons fermement que la Porte ne se refusera pas à reconnaître que toutes nos réclamations et toutes nos objections que vous êtes autorisé à lui communiquer, et

sur lesquelles vous êtes chargé d'insister, sont parfaitement légitimes, et qu'elle ne tardera pas à faire droit à nos demandes.

J'attends avec un vif intérêt votre prochain rapport sur le résultat de vos démarches.

No. 29.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.

(No. 279.)

St. Petersburgh, May 27, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship herewith copy of a reply which I have received from Prince Gortchakow to the note which I addressed to his Highness, by your Lordship's instruction, on the subject of the navigation of the Danube, copy of which was annexed to my despatch No. 269 of the 25th instant.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 29.

Prince Gortchakow to Lord A. Loftus.

St. Pétersbourg, le 15 Mai, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

VOTRE Excellence m'a adressé en date du 12 Mai courant une note par laquelle elle m'a fait part des vues du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique quant à la question de la navigation du Danube. Elle a en même temps exprimé le désir d'être informée de la manière dont le Cabinet Impérial envisage cette question.

Nous avons déjà été dans le cas de nous expliquer avec le Cabinet de Vienne, qui nous avait communiqué des vues analogues à celles du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique.

D'ordre de Sa Majesté l'Empereur, j'ai invité l'Ambassadeur de mon auguste Maître à Vienne à déclarer de la manière la plus formelle à M. le Comte Andrassy que le Cabinet Impérial ne considère l'interruption de la navigation du Danube que comme un incident de fait temporaire, rendu inévitable par l'état de guerre actuel, mais qui ne préjudicie en rien pour l'avenir le principe de libre navigation du fleuve, que le Cabinet Impérial fera tout ce qui est possible pour restreindre les entraves momentanées apportées à la navigation, quant à l'étendue et à la durée, dans les strictes limites commandées par les nécessités de guerre, et enfin que le Cabinet Impérial s'engage à se mettre d'accord avec le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois pour rétablir la liberté du fleuve aussitôt que faire se pourra.

Je prie votre Excellence de vouloir bien confirmer ces vues au Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique.

Je ne puis que me féliciter de ce qu'elles se trouvent entièrement conformes à celles que votre Excellence vient de nous communiquer.

Recevez, &c.

(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

No. 30.

Lord Odo Russell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 221. Secret.)

Berlin, May 27, 1877.

My Lord,

PRINCE BISMARCK invited me on Monday evening to his house, and said that before leaving Berlin for the rest of the summer and autumn he wished to assure me again and again of his anxious desire to act in concert with England for the re-establishment and maintenance of peace in Europe.

Her Majesty's Government had now taken an important step towards pacification.

Count Schouvaloff had communicated your Lordship's note of the 6th instant to him, and it had given him the greatest possible satisfaction, because it contained the

declaration of a policy in the East on the sound basis of which the war could be localized and a lasting peace be made.

He had also been much gratified at the statesmanlike and moderate views expressed by Count Schouvaloff, in whose pacific policy he had implicit faith, and he sincerely hoped the Count's influence might prevail at St. Petersburgh.

Thanks to your Lordship's note the rocks ahead were visible, and could be avoided.

It was quite clear that the interests of England could not come into collision with those of Russia, either in Egypt or in the Persian Gulf. The only two points in your Lordship's note to Count Schouvaloff which would have to be dealt with were Constantinople and the navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus.

Now Count Schouvaloff, who wished the war to be brought to a close as soon as possible, thought that if, after crossing the Danube, the Russians had a victory on this side of the Balkan, a first attempt should be made at suspending hostilities to try peace negotiations before the Balkan was crossed, and to that first attempt he, Prince Bismarck, would gladly give his best support.

Should, however, this first attempt unhappily fail, and the Russians proceed to cross the Balkan, then, Prince Bismarck thought, a second should be made before the Russians reached Adrianople.

If this second attempt failed likewise, and the Russians, flushed with success, marched upon Constantinople, then the further localization of the war would become problematical, and the peace of Europe doubtful.

He therefore most sincerely hoped that the frank warning conveyed to St. Petersburgh through Count Schouvaloff, that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to witness the passing of Constantinople into other hands than those of its present possessors, would be followed up by an English occupation of the Dardanelles, the effect of which would be to arrest the advance of the Russians on Constantinople, and to facilitate their acceptance of peace negotiations before the further localization of the war became impossible.

He would then gladly place the whole weight of the moral influence of Germany at the disposal of Her Majesty's Government in the interest of peace.

I asked him what he thought the conditions of peace should be.

Prince Bismarck said he could not yet foretell what pretensions Russia might put forward after a successful campaign, nor did he feel to know what conditions the other Powers might be willing to agree to. Germany having no direct interest in the matter would support any conditions that secured a lasting peace to Europe.

The important question of the improvement of the condition of the Christian subjects of the Sultan had been carefully considered at the Constantinople Conference, and the Powers would therefore find it easy to agree on a subject they knew so well.

Other peace conditions must naturally depend in great measure on the results of the war.

Russia would certainly claim the slice out of Bessarabia she lost by the Crimean war, not as a conquest but as a restitution, and to that claim neither Germany nor Austria had any reason to object. Russia would probably also claim some modification of the present arrangements respecting the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and on that point difficulties would probably arise, not on the part of Germany and Austria, but on the part of the other Guaranteeing Powers.

Prince Bismarck dwelt at length on the debt of gratitude which Germany owed to Russia, who had proved herself to be a true and reliable friend in need, and concluded by saying that he would give his last effort to bring about a cordial and intimate understanding between England and Russia, to which Germany would become a party.

On hearing that I was about to go on leave to London for a week, Prince Bismarck requested me in the warmest terms to assure your Lordship of his earnest desire to bring about an intimate and lasting alliance between England and Germany; and if I had any "good news" to bring him in return, to come and see him in the country wherever he might be.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ODO RUSSELL.

No. 31.

Safvet Pâsha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 1.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 29 Mai, 1877.*

NOTRE Consul-Général à Raguse nous avait télégraphié le 24 Mai que, malgré ses démarches pressantes et les promesses du Gouverneur de Cattaro, le navire Autrichien "Vincenzo" que, sur des informations circonstanciées, nous avons déjà signalé à l'attention du Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois comme chargé de contrebande de guerre pour le Monténégro, que ce navire, dis-je . . . par un vapeur du Lloyd, était en train de débarquer son chargement.

Nous avons immédiatement invité notre Ambassadeur à Vienne à appeler là-dessus la sérieuse attention du Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois et à provoquer l'adoption des mesures nécessaires pour arrêter le débarquement de cette contrebande de guerre. Aléco Pacha vient de nous répondre que, d'après le Comte Andrassy, il n'y avait rien de fondé dans l'assertion de Daniel Effendi, et que ce dernier était mystifié. Le Comte lui a promis, cependant, de prendre des renseignements à cet égard. Quelles que soient les déclarations du Comte Andrassy, il n'en est pas moins vrai que les munitions dont il s'agit ont été débarquées à Cattaro; à l'heure qu'il est même, elles ont dû être parvenues à leur destination. J'ai tenu à vous faire connaître ces faits regrettables à plus d'un titre, afin que votre Excellence pût s'en inspirer dans ses conversations avec Lord Derby.

No. 32.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 1.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 30 Mai, 1877.*

QUELQUES jeunes fonctionnaires de la Sublime Porte, cédant à un entraînement irréfléchi et ayant pris une part indirecte à la manifestation insensée des Softas de ces derniers jours, viennent d'être provisoirement éloignées de la capitale. En vertu des pouvoirs que lui confère l'état de siége récemment proclamé, le Gouvernement Impérial a jugé opportun de réagir, par cette mesure, contre les tendances anti-patriotiques qui pouvaient jeter du trouble dans les esprits et compromettre la tranquillité à l'intérieur.

No. 33.

Memorandum communicated to the Earl of Derby by the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, June 1, 1877.

L'ADMINISTRATION des télégraphes Russes a été informée que le Gouvernement Ottoman avait suspendu la transmission des dépêches télégraphiques entre la Turquie et la Russie par la cable sous-marin d'Odessa pendant la durée de la guerre actuelle. Cette administration a été avertie en même temps que le service du cable susmentionné était arrêté non-seulement pour les dépêches Russes, mais aussi pour celles des autres pays.

Sans contester à la Turquie le droit de prendre telle mesure qu'elle croirait opportune en temps de guerre, on ne saurait perdre de vue les inconvénients qu'entraînerait pour les autres nations la fermeture totale de la ligne d'Odessa-Constantinople, et les perturbations qui pourraient en résulter pour les intérêts privés en général. En tout cas il n'y aurait aucun motif d'étendre aux télégrammes de provenance étrangère l'interdiction dont la correspondance télégraphique par le cable sous-marin se trouve frappée entre la Russie et la Turquie en vertu de l'état de guerre.

Il est vrai qu'aux termes de l'Article VIII de la Convention de St. Pétersbourg les Gouvernements respectifs se réservent le droit d'arrêter la circulation des dépêches internationales sur les lignes télégraphiques de leur territoire.

Sans qu'il y ait lieu de mettre en doute les droits réservés par l'Article précité et dont le Gouvernement Ottoman vient de faire usage en prenant l'initiative de la suppression des correspondances télégraphiques avec la Russie, il serait toutefois nécessaire de prendre en considération l'importance du cable sous-marin reliant Odessa et Constantinople. Ce cable constitue la voie télégraphique la plus directe pour les

correspondances échangées entre la Turquie et la plupart des Etats de l'Europe, et de plus il a été proposé dernièrement d'établir un service télégraphique accéléré entre l'Angleterre et la Turquie, par la voie du fil électrique Anglo-Indien qui traverse le territoire Russe, et du cable sous-marin d'Odessa-Constantinople. Ces motifs engagent le Cabinet Impérial à rechercher une intervention amicale à Constantinople, afin de représenter à la Sublime Porte que la suppression de la correspondance par le cable d'Odessa n'offre à la Turquie aucun avantage réel, tandis qu'en rétablissant cette correspondance, du moins pour les parties non-belligérantes, la Porte rendrait un véritable service aux intérêts commerciaux des Puissances neutres, et, entr'autres, à ceux de l'Angleterre; que du reste il serait loisible à la Porte de maintenir l'interdiction en vigueur à l'égard des dépêches de provenance Russe.

La Convention conclue entre la Russie et la Turquie le 26 Octobre, 1871, autorisant l'établissement d'un cable sous-marin entre Odessa et Constantinople, ne renferme, il est vrai, aucune clause pour le cas d'une guerre éventuelle. Cependant, aux termes du projet de concession et sous forme d'engagement assumé par les deux parties contractantes vis-à-vis d'un tiers, il était stipulé (§ 12) qu'en temps de guerre, la transmission serait libre de toute dépêche privée et ne traitant pas des affaires gouvernementales, politiques ou militaires.

Ce projet se trouvait à l'examen à St. Pétersbourg, lorsqu'une dépêche de l'Ambassadeur de Russie à Constantinople est venue exposer certaines objections élevées par la Porte. Désireux comme il l'était alors de mener à bonne fin la Convention avec la Turquie, le Cabinet Impérial n'a pas insisté sur le maintien de cet Article, dont l'adoption cependant aurait pu être d'une grande utilité pour les eventualités d'une guerre.

Toute cette question semblerait devoir intéresser surtout la Grande Bretagne, vu le récent projet d'arrangement pour la transmission plus rapide des télégrammes Anglais aux Indes par la voie d'Odessa.

Le Gouvernement de la Reine n'aurait-il pas l'intention d'entrer dans l'examen de cette affaire en vue d'une communication ou d'une démarche à faire auprès de qui de droit?

No. 34.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 1.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 31, 1877, 3:30 P.M.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs has offered to allow neutral vessels on the Danube to ascend above Tmok on condition that guarantees are given that they are not destined for Russians or carriage of contraband of war. Austrian Ambassador has stated to-day, in a note to the Porte, that the Austrian Government are not only willing to give these guarantees, but will consent that the Turkish authorities at [illegible]kale should visit such vessels to ascertain that they are executed. Austrian Ambassador further states in his note that "his Government hope that the Porte will conform to their just demand by no longer insisting upon measures which they cannot accept, and which, if persisted in, would be of a nature to provoke conflicts which they desire to avoid, and to which it would be certainly not in the interest of the Porte to give rise." I have informed Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that I am instructed to support Austrian demand.

No. 35.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 1, 1877, 2:30 P.M.

IN reply to your telegram of the 30th, Colonel Wellesley had better accept the invitation to accompany the Russian army.

No. 36.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 1, 1877.

WITH reference to your despatch No. 497 of the 23rd ultimo, have you addressed a representation to the Porte respecting the freedom of the navigation of the Danube, similar to that of the Austrian Ambassador?

No. 37.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 2.)

(No. 21. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, May* 12, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship the arrival here from Corfu on the evening of the 8th instant, of the Mediterranean squadron under the command of Vice-Admiral Hornby. The vessels consist of Her Majesty's steam-ship "Alexandra," "Monarch," "Swiftsure," "Devastation," "Hotspur," and "Raleigh," the latter having come over from the Piræus. Her Majesty's ship "Sultan," under the command of his Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh, joined the squadron outside Suda Bay towards noon to-day, and the whole fleet then stood towards Port Saïd.

These occasional exhibitions of naval power greatly impose on the imagination of the natives, and are viewed with satisfaction by both religious sections of the community—by the Christians because they feel that the presence of the ships of a great Christian nation are a restraint on the religious passions of the Mussulmans, and by the latter because they have never fairly abandoned the hope that in the long run England will prove their ally. The last time the Mediterranean fleet visited Crete was in the spring of 1870.

I told Admiral Hornby that I thought it would not be long before an insurrection broke out, and that with such a prospect in view, it would be an advantage, did the interests of the service allow of it, for a man-of-war to be stationed here. The Admiral regretted that his instructions did not permit him to break up his force, which he could only do under the most exceptional circumstances. The Austrian ironclad which I reported as having come in on the 5th instant, left the day after the arrival of our squadron, so that there is no foreign ship-of-war on the station at present.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 38.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 2.)

(No. 22. Political.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, May* 12, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship the opening on the 10th instant, of the Cretan General Assembly. The Cretan members are showing themselves very refractory, having refused the first day to elect the judges, and to-day declining to attend at all until the money given as compensation for leaving their business, 9*l.* a-head, be paid them. The Treasury being empty, none of the Deputies put in an appearance.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 39.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 2.)

(No. 23. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Canea, Crete, May* 12, 1877.

IN my despatch No. 20 of the 7th instant I had the honour to inform your Lordship that I believed that it was the intention of the Christian deputies to demand

in the approaching Session of the General Assembly that Crete be erected into a Principality. As your Lordship is aware, this idea has been fermenting in their brains for a long time past, but it turned out that it was not their intention to broach it in Parliament, but privately to me. I received the first positive intimation of this intention on the 10th instant, when Mr. Vice-Consul Moazzo came to inform me that one of the Christian members for Candia and two of the members for Sphakia had called upon him and stated that they had been delegated by their more prominent fellow deputies to address me on the subject of the future lot of their country; that seeing that they could not approach me at such a time without exciting the suspicions of the authorities, they preferred to make the Vice-Consul, with whom they were on business relations, the medium of their communication. To him accordingly they stated that, after long and mature consultation between themselves and the Christian chiefs, they had decided that the moment had arrived for making a last attempt at improving their condition by bringing about a change of government; that as Greeks they had naturally looked in the first instance towards Greece to aid them in realizing their aspirations, but that they had become painfully aware not only that she could do nothing to help them to gain their liberty, but that they could not hope under her administration to attain to a state of happiness and prosperity. They, therefore, now came, speaking in the name of three-fourths of the population of Crete, to beg Her Majesty's Government to take their island and make it a Principality under the protection of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. Mr. Moazzo first asked them what authority they had for speaking in the name of the entire body of Christian deputies; to which they replied that eight or nine of their recognized Parliamentary leaders had agreed that they three should make the proposition of which they had just delivered themselves, the rest having only a general notion of it, seeing that it would be running a manifest risk to entrust a secret of that importance to a body of forty-two members. The Vice-Consul then told them that he would be the faithful interpreter of their wishes, but that they must prepare themselves for an unfavourable answer, as he felt sure that my instructions would not allow of my accepting their offer. I told Mr. Moazzo briefly to inform the delegates that my instructions most certainly did not authorize me to listen to the overtures of the deputies, who must be aware that the step they were taking was a most serious one, and that I strongly advised them to refrain from any proceedings tending to rebellion.

The Vice-Consul informed me the same day that he had faithfully delivered my message which had produced a most painful impression on his hearers, who were broken-hearted at the shipwreck of their hopes. They had further begged him to request me to telegraph their proposition to my Government, but I told him to inform them that they must consider my answer as final. I was unwilling that they should continue to nurse expectations which must inevitably end in disappointment.

The substance of the above I had the honour of communicating to your Lordship in my cyphered telegram of yesterday's date.

The tenacity with which, in spite of repeated rebuffs, the Christian Islanders cling to the hope that England will one day lift from off their necks the yoke which they find so galling has been a curious feature in the late period of trouble; and no less so is the equal eagerness with which their Mussulman fellow-countrymen catch at any straw which seems to offer a chance of England becoming their ally. No amount of discouragement suffices to extinguish the hopes of either party.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS R. SANDWITH.

No. 40.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 20. Political.)

Trebizond, May 15, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that there have been for some time past slight disorders and petty larcenies, especially in the villages bordering on the Erzeroom road, but they were not of a character to attract particular attention.

Within the last fortnight, however, they have assumed in some villages in the immediate vicinity of the town a character of such gravity as to merit serious consideration.

Without speaking of two murders perpetrated one month ago on Christians, one

at the village of Ile, three hours distant, and the other at Koukla, four hours from Trebizond, and which were assigned to revenge, I shall mention other cases in which a similar motive cannot be invoked.

A fortnight ago armed Turks, having entered the house of a Greek named Ilandik, at the village of Politi, three-quarters of an hour from this, his wife threw herself at their feet, and begged them to take every article in their possession, but to spare her life and that of her husband. The Turks despoiled completely the house, leaving the inmates unhurt.

On the night of the 3rd instant other armed Turks, having knocked at the door of a Greek house at the village of Colomana, an hour distant from the town, the owner's wife, named Sophia, asked through the window what was wanted, and on her refusing to open the door, as requested to do, she was shot, and died a few hours after. The noise having attracted the neighbours, the assailants decamped; but, before expiring, Sophia mentioned the name of one of them, whom she had recognized. I am assured that the neighbours know all those who formed part of the band, but that they do not dare to denounce them, fearing their vengeance, or that of their relatives, if the culprits were arrested.

Two days after Turks again attacked the house of a Greek priest at the village of Ergoli, two hours distant from Trebizond, who was living with his brother. The son of the latter was murdered, his son-in-law severely wounded, his two daughters bear slight cuts on the neck, while he has himself four slight wounds, and the priest a similar one.

Yesterday night eight Turks plundered the house of a Greek named Sarantidis at the village of Hotz, one hour from this, and as the owner was away at the time, the keeper was told that if 10*l.* were not ready to be given to them the following night, they would burn down the house.

In presence of this state of things, the Government of this province finds itself, in consequence of want of a sufficient force of police, unable to adopt adequate measures to secure public tranquillity. The present force is still to be reduced, the fifty or sixty mounted policemen belonging to this vilayet having been ordered, I understand, to join the Erzeroom army.

However, the police have succeeded in apprehending the Turk mentioned by Sophia as being her murderer, and another Turk suspected to be one of the band which plundered the house of Ilandik.

On the news of the attack on the family of the priest being received, the Pasha despatched immediately the Alaï Bey (Colonel of Police) at Ergoli. Having summoned the Turks in his presence, about 100 of them came fully armed, and, amongst them, the presumed chief of the band of murderers, a man of some influence in his village.

In spite of this display the Alaï Bey, who, by all accounts, is a man of energy, managed to arrest, then and there, with a dozen zaptiehs, all the force at his disposal, the chief in question, and subsequently five other Turks, said to belong to the same band, among whom one, who, there is reason to believe, was wounded in the struggle.

It is to be hoped that the Courts of Justice will display in trying the same energy which the Alaï Bey showed in apprehending the suspected parties, and that a severe and prompt example will be made of the culprits.

If this line of conduct were not followed, the acts of brigandage, which seem now to be confined to the villages surrounding the town, may, in consequence of impunity, or even of delay in carrying out justice, extend to other parts of the vilayet, and place the whole Christian population in great jeopardy.

The Pasha tells me that the Mussulmans suffer as much. I have heard, however, of no special case concerning them. I do not go the length of saying that the brigands will spare them for the sake of religion; but there is no doubt that, when they have the choice, they attack Christians rather than Mussulmans, who, being armed and accustomed to the use of arms, may prove to be dangerous adversaries.

I have urged on the Pasha the necessity of adopting in the meantime some measure calculated to protect the peasants, and have suggested that a certain number of the inhabitants of each village should be ordered to watch in turn during the night. He answered that a plan of this description was about to be adopted by the Council of the Vilayet.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 41.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 505. Confidential.)

Therapia, May 24, 1877.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED, a day or two ago, the following message from the Sultan through one of the chief officers of his household:—

"His Majesty has commanded me to inform his Excellency that he had read with profound pain a recent telegram from the correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" at Soukhoum Kaleh, giving an account of the massacre by Russian troops in the Caucasus of Circassian men, women, and children; and His Majesty is anxious to hear what impression the Russian cruelties will produce on the British public, and if they will excite the same amount of popular indignation which was so abundantly shown as regards the Turkish excesses in Bulgaria last year. Should they not be resented by the British public, the Mahommedan people would believe that the agitation in England had sprung from religious, and not from humane, motives."

I could not give any answer to the Sultan's question. I could not admit that there might be persons renowned for their humanity and piety who did not view the taking of Mahommedan lives quite in the same light as the taking of Christian lives; nor was I acquainted with the telegram to which His Majesty referred, and Said Pasha, who was charged with His Majesty's message, had not a copy of it.

This incident appears to me worthy of mention, as showing the feelings of Mahommedans with regard to the crusade now waged against them by Russia—feelings which might, under certain circumstances, lead to very grave and deplorable results.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 42.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 506.)

Therapia, May 24, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report addressed to me by Major-General Sir Arnold Kemball with reference to the Russian invasion of Armenia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 42.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Erzeroom, May 15, 1877.

Sir,

THE telegrams, of which I subjoin copies, will have acquainted your Excellency of the opinion I have formed of the inability of the Turks to withstand the progress of Russian invasion in this quarter. My opinion is based upon the unreadiness which distinguishes all their operations, and upon the manifest inadequacy of their military resources. Their plans and resolutions are, as usual, unexceptionable, but they have been postponed to the last moment, and time does not now admit, with the means at their disposal, of giving effect to the extreme efforts they are making to strengthen their position.

In illustration of this statement I may mention the condition of the fortifications of this town, of which I have just closed my inspection. On the heights of Devch Boyun to the east, commanding the approach from Kiupri-keui, and on those to the west, which face the gorge of the Palan Doken, and to a certain extent overlooks the plain in the direction of Trebizond, the earthworks, as far as they go, are well designed and solidly constructed, but of the former the major portion, forming the outer line of defence, has been hardly commenced, while in the direction of Olti the approaches remain still wholly undefended, the first sod of the earthworks designed to cover the pass beyond Hinsk not having been turned when I reached Erzeroum. Again, the

armament of these fortifications is limited to about sixty guns of every description* (of which say only twenty-five Krupp, or on Krupp's principle, constructed of bronze, at Constantinople, and the remainder old siege guns of various calibres) where twice that number would barely suffice, and over sixty Krupp siege guns are still lying on the quays of Trebizond from the want of means to convey them to their destination.† I am assured by the authorities that more guns of the old pattern exist in store, and that the arsenal is amply stocked with ammunition for all the pieces, but from independent information I am disposed to doubt the accuracy of their statements.

In the way of provisions, too, Ismail Pasha vaguely asserts that grain has been amply stored for the use of the garrison and town population in the event of a siege. He admits, however, that the granaries are for the most part represented by the stock to be found in the surrounding villages, on which seals have been placed, and from these the supply is certainly liable to be intercepted, either by the enemy or by the unwillingness of the owners to give up their property without payment; while in the town itself I understand, on good authority, that the grain collected by the Government is hardly equal to a week's consumption. Meantime the supplies available for the forces aligned on the Soghanlee Dagh are known to be very precarious, being dependent on transport from this quarter. Meat is said to be abundant, but rations of bread are issued to the troops once only in two, or even three days.

So far as I have been able to discover (from conflicting accounts) the strength of the Turkish forces engaged in opposing the advance of the Russian army may be roundly estimated at 80,000 men, of which one-fourth or more is composed of Mustahfiz ‡ ("Landsturm") and Mounwin (auxiliary levies) hastily formed in battalions, and three-fourths regular battalions, including Nizam and Redif of all three bans.

Ten additional regular battalions are on the point of reaching Erzeroum from Trebizond, and ten more are reported to have sailed from Constantinople for the same destination. Squads of Mustahfiz and Mounwin are also coming in from the different centres in the outlying districts.

Of the above forces, I gather from official authority that about 18 battalions form the garrison of Batoum, 12 battalions the garrison of Ardahan, and 30 battalions the garrison of Kars; 12 battalions are with Moukhtar Pasha at Bardez, defending the pass of Zakim, 4 or 5 battalions facing the pass at Millidus, and 16 battalions§ occupying the ground between Toprak Kaleh, Delibaba, and Molla Suleyman, which contains the passes that block the direct road from Bayazid. The remainder are distributed at different points to watch the approaches in the direction of Zerbkhaneh and Gulentab on the right, and of Ardahan and Pennek on the left, and to maintain the communications vih Khorasan, Kiupri-keui, Hassan Kalaa, Erzeroum, &c.

The strategical importance of Kiupri Keui, where the two affluents unite to form the Araxes, and where all roads meet from the base of the Soghanlee Dagh and Bayazid, cannot be overrated, nor has, indeed, been overlooked by the Turks in their general plan of operations. Where, however, retreat would seem sooner or later to be inevitable, it was to be supposed that the first care of the Turkish military chiefs would have been to secure such a position with strong field intrenchments, for which the ground presents great facilities, as well to cover the retiring troops as to check the pursuit of the enemy; yet it was only yesterday that the Sultan's Aide-de-camp, Mehemed Pasha, proceeded to lay out the works which are to be presently constructed and garrisoned by the ten battalions arriving from Trebizond.

The Turkish army is without an Intelligence Department of any description, and it is only lately that the authorities have thought of having recourse to spies and other similar means of information, not easily improvised without liberal expenditure. It is accordingly upon reports from European sources that I assume the Russian expeditionary forces to amount to 100,000 men. Their advance appears to have been effected in two minor columns from Akhalkhalaki and Akhalzick, destined for Batoum

* Exclusive of five or six batteries of field-guns, which could not be sent to the front owing to the want of horses. Of the Krupp guns in position, some six are of 15 centimètres, the remainder 12 centimètres.

† On the road from Trebizond we overtook a battery of field-guns which was being dragged up by hand from village to village. Except for some distance on either side of Gumush Khané, where the repairs are on the point of completion, the road is good throughout from Trebizond to Erzeroum, though still heavy from snow and water over the Kop Dagh.

‡ These men have shown great aptitude for learning the amount of drill necessary to enable them to march and act in bodies. As yet they have been furnished with breech-loading rifles, but they are without uniforms and in rags.

§ The Turkish Artillery is limited to 12 field batteries, but of their disposition I am not as yet accurately informed.

and Ardahan, and in two main columns from Gumri and Erivan, directed respectively upon Kars and Bayazid. Their plan of campaign I have surmised in my telegram. The attack of Batoum and Ardahan appears to have been seriously contemplated with a view to the capture of both places as the preliminaries to a general advance, and to this end the two minor columns are supposed to have been since reinforced by detachments marching by cross-roads from Kars. Batoum is rumoured to have successfully resisted repeated assaults, but the fall of Ardahan has been frequently reported, and is now currently believed, though the authorities, being without intelligence of any kind, profess ignorance of the event.

We have heard of Russian reconnaissances in the direction of Olti, of the Milliduz Pass, and as far as Karakillissa, on the Bayazid route; but whether owing to the incompleteness of their preparations, to the mountain roads being still heavy with snow and water, or whether waiting the fall of Ardahan to disengage their troops, these reconnaissances have not been followed by any movements *en masse*. The only collisions reported have been with the Turkish outposts, of no real importance.

In pursuance of their plans the Russians have also occupied Kagysman in force, with the view, it may be inferred, of descending viâ Zerbkhanch, or through Gotshewan, on viâ Gulentab, to turn Delibaba, in concert with the columns advancing directly on the passes. Their road is said to be perfectly practicable in summer. There are other roads, not well defined, to the eastward of Delibaba, by which that place may also be turned, and which have been reconnoitred by Russian cavalry, but they are difficult, and involve considerable detours.

One of the advantages of the Russian army consists in its great superiority in cavalry. Their strength is estimated at from 12,000 to 16,000 men, chiefly organized irregulars; whereas the Turkish mounted contingent consists of four regiments of Nizam cavalry, of under 400 men each, and a body of auxiliaries, not as yet exceeding 2,000 men, composed of Circassians, Kurds, and Karapapaks, of very doubtful value in regular warfare to repel a foreign invasion. Detachments of Circassians are daily arriving from the interior, and Sheikh Obeid Ulla, a saintly person held in great veneration by the Kurds, has undertaken to provide a further large contingent of Kurdish horsemen; but not much reliance is to be placed on their timely support.

I may here mention that appeals were made to me on my journey from Trebizond, and complaints are frequently received here from other quarters, of the exactions and depredations committed by the Circassians on their passage to the front, several villages on their line of march having been abandoned by the inhabitants in consequence. These miseries are, however, more especially incidental to the conditions of war in Turkey, and, where neither pay nor rations are forthcoming, are obviously beyond the control of the local authorities.

The Russians, with what truth I am unable to say, are reported to be conveying provisions and stores through Persian territory as far down as Kazli Geul, at which point the ground is in dispute between Turkey and Persia.

A force of eight battalions of infantry, under Faik Pasha, is stationed at Van to watch the Persian frontier.

Finding it impracticable to travel by post to Bardez, I have been obliged to defer my departure to the front with my own horses till to-morrow. The distance from Erzeroum to Zakim is 72 miles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

No. 43.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 507. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 24, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of an interesting private letter to me from Major-General Sir A. Kemball, dated May 15, and consequently previous to the events described in his telegrams transmitted by me to your Lordship yesterday. It reached me too late to be forwarded by the messenger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 43.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

(Extract.) *Erzeroom, May 15, 1877.*

BE assured that the game is up in this quarter, and that another fortnight or three weeks will see the Russians domiciled in Erzeroom. The Turkish leaders, with Ismail Pasha at their head, are very Chinamen in their ignorant appreciation of the situation, and in their blind reliance on the main chance. They hope against hope that England, or some other God-directed agency, will be prompted to come to their aid at the last moment, and meantime the most doubtful success, or the most insignificant failure, elates or depresses them in inverse proportions. What is worse, they try to deceive their friends, while they delude themselves with false estimates of their ability to carry on the struggle. What it may be possible to conceal they cannot be induced to disclose, and they have always a ready excuse for non-performance or procrastination. An order given is in their view an order executed on which to base the most vital calculations, and Erzeroom, for instance, is confidently assumed to be well-stocked with provisions when village stores have been scaled up for appropriation without reference to the possible failure of transport or to the risks of interception. In one word, "Allah Kerim" in Turkish does not mean "Aide-toi et Dieu l'aidera." After all allowances must be made. Bricks cannot be manufactured without straw. Without money soldiers cannot be fed much less paid; granaries cannot be stocked, guns and munitions provided, transport and commissariat organised, hospitals and ambulances established, or the hundred-and-one things done which are indispensable to the success of military operations. With money, however, and some twenty English officers to control its expenditure, and mould the available forces, I should not despair even now of turning back the Russians. Effectually checked at this point during the time necessary to husband our resources and recruit our strength, they could not bear the strain of a campaign in an exhausted country, and very moderate bounties would suffice to raise the Kurds and other cognate tribes, and enable them, under proper guidance, to harass the Russians in the rear, and effectually impede their communications. It is idle, however, to speculate on the unattainable. If England means to come in at all I have already pointed out the consequences of coming in too late.

The Russians appear to be acting with prudence and foresight. They are paying for all they take, and are treating the inhabitants, Mussulman and Christian alike, with great forbearance. This is contrary to their wont, and would seem to indicate the design of permanent occupation.

It has been suggested to me that I ought to have a doctor on my increased staff; I do not ask for one, but out of consideration to others leave the matter for your decision. The Red Cross seems, on the present occasion, to be backward in coming forward. The army doctors here are few in number, and not first-rate in quality. From themselves I learn, through Zohrab, that their hospital stock of medicines is well-nigh exhausted.

Zohrab's story about the Kars telegraph reads very well. When the Pasha mentioned that communication had been re-established between Moukhtar Pasha and Kars, I warned him of the expedient by which the Russians could read every message passing to and fro, whereon to show his acquaintance with such dodges he concocted the few fables which he said he had already transmitted for their benefit.

No. 44.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 508.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 24, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of a despatch from Count Andrassy to the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at the Porte, and of the "exposé" of the steps taken thereupon by Count Zichy, in the interest of the navigation of the Danube by Austro-Hungarian subjects, and of their result.

I am indebted to my Austro-Hungarian colleague for these documents.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 44.

Count Andrassy to Baron Herbert.

Vienne, le 6 Mai, 1877.

EN présence de la guerre qui vient d'éclater entre la Russie et la Turquie, nous avons dû nous préoccuper de la situation faite à notre commerce et à notre navigation par les opérations militaires qui sont à la veille de se dérouler sur les bords du Bas Danube.

L'Article CIX de l'Acte Final du Congrès de Vienne a décidé, en thèse générale, que la navigation des rivières séparant ou traversant plusieurs Etats sera entièrement libre, et ne pourra, sous le rapport du commerce, et sauf les règlement de police, être interdite à personne. Cette disposition a été confirmé en ce qui concerne le Danube par l'Article XV du Traité de Paris de 1856.

Aux termes de ces stipulations il ne peut être apporté aucun obstacle quel qu'il soit à la libre navigation du Danube.

Les transactions internationales que je viens de rappeler n'impliquent point, il est vrai, la neutralité absolue de la voie fluviale. En dehors des ouvrages et établissements créés par la Commission Européenne du Danube, ainsi que du personnel de cette Commission, déclarés neutres par l'Article XXI de l'Acte Public de 1865, la liberté de navigation garantie sur le Danube, nous sommes obligés d'en convenir ne saurait empêcher que le cours inférieur du fleuve, de même que les deux rives ne puissent être enveloppés dans la lutte qui vient de s'ouvrir.

Les devoirs qui découlent de l'attitude de neutralité que nous avons jugé à propos d'adopter en face du conflit actuel, nous interdisent de faire prévaloir le droit de libre navigation sur les mesures que pourraient être prises par les belligérants dans l'intérêt de leurs opérations militaires.

Mais tout en admettant que les incidents de la guerre puissent amener des entraves passagères pour la navigation du Danube, nous nous reconnaissons le devoir de réserver dès à présent de la manière la plus formelle auprès des Puissances belligérantes le principe de la liberté de cette navigation du Danube, que l'Autriche-Hongrie est intéressé en première ligne à voir maintenu.

Vous êtes donc chargé, M. le Baron, de porter officiellement à la connaissance de la Sublime Porte les observations qui précèdent. Vous voudrez bien ajouter que si nous consentons à nous résigner aux inconvénients inséparables de l'état de guerre sur la ligne du Danube, il est bien entendu que cette situation exceptionnelle ne pourra en aucune façon être invoquée comme précédent au préjudice de la liberté de navigation que les mesures restrictives de cette liberté qui seraient rendues indispensables par les exigences de la guerre se régleront sur les principes internationaux, que ces restrictions ne dépasseront pas les limites tracées par la nécessité la plus impérieuse, et qu'aussitôt que le cours des opérations de la guerre le permettra, les Puissances belligérantes s'entendront avec nous pour rétablir la liberté de la navigation sur le Bas Danube.

Vous voudrez bien, en outre, M. le Baron, prier le Gouvernement Impérial de nous parvenir le plus tôt possible une déclaration conforme à ces indications.

Recevez, &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 44.

Exposé des démarches faites par l'Ambassadeur d'Autriche-Hongrie dans l'intérêt de la Navigation Nationale et des résultats obtenus.

LA note de l'Ambassade d'Autriche-Hongrie adressée à la Sublime Porte le 17 courant pour l'informer du contenu de la dépêche du Comte Andrassy du 6 Mai, n'a pas encore reçu de réponse.

Précédemment déjà l'Ambassade avait réclamé de la part du Gouvernement Ottoman le remboursement de la valeur au prix du revient plus les frais de transport et une indemnité additionnelle de 10 pour cent pour toutes les cargaisons de propriété Austro-Hongroise réquisitionnées par les autorités Ottomanes. La Porte a émané, en base d'une décision du Conseil des Ministres, des ordres conformes à cette demande, et a ordonné dans un cas spécial le versement de l'indemnité réclamée, qui toutefois n'a pas encore été effectuée.

Quant aux cargaisons saisies, mais non encore confisquées, l'Ambassade a demandé ou l'expropriation et la bonification selon les modalités sous-indiquées ou

l'autorisation au renvoi dans les eaux Austro-Hongroises avec paiement de dommages-intérêts pour les pertes causées par la saisie.

Par rapport à cette dernière demande, la Porte s'est bornée à mander à Rustchuk pour des informations télégraphiques sur chaque cas spécial de ce genre. Aucun rapport ne lui est encore parvenu à la suite de cet ordre. La Porte conteste d'ailleurs l'obligation du paiement, et déclare ne pouvoir pas non plus accorder l'autorisation au retransport dans les eaux Austro-Hongroises pour le motif que ces navires seraient saisis et achetés dans ce cas par les Russes pour compléter leurs matériaux de ponts, encore insuffisants. Le Gouvernement Ottoman rejette la responsabilité de ses mesures sur la Russie, qui, par l'ouverture immédiate des hostilités après la déclaration de guerre, auraient empêché la Turquie d'accorder un délai de libre passage aux navires en destination pour le cours supérieur du Danube.

No. 45.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 509.)

My Lord, *Therapia, May 25*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a report from Mr. Sandison, with reference to the demonstration made yesterday by a body of Softas against Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, and Mahmoud Damat Pasha, the Sultan's brother-in-law.

Your Lordship will, no doubt, guess that the "distinguished Englishman" to whom the Grand Vizier alluded, is Mr. Butler Johnson, who, I have reason to believe, has organized this demonstration, and, it is said, paid for it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 45.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Therapia, May 24*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that, about 1 o'clock this afternoon, a large body of Softas proceeded to the Chamber of Deputies to ask for the immediate dismissal of the Seraskier, and of Mahmoud Pasha Damat, the Sultan's brother-in-law.

The Softas were stopped by the soldiers on guard at the gate from entering the interior of the building, but a small deputation of their number having got admitted into the Chamber, addressed the Deputies by asking for explanations as regards the taking of Ardahan by the Russians.

The President, Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, replied that the duty of dealing with such questions devolved upon himself and the rest of the Deputies who had been elected by the people and by the Softas themselves, to look after the general interests of the country, and that they (the Softas) had consequently no voice or responsibility in the matter. In the meanwhile, a feeling of alarm having made itself conspicuous among the Deputies, the President thought proper to adjourn at once the sitting of the Chamber, and to appear personally to the Softas at the gate, who, it is asserted, unanimously clamoured out for the immediate dismissal of the two objectionable Ministers. His Excellency found no difficulty in calming the excitement of the Softas, who began to disperse immediately after having cried out "long live the Sultan," and cheered the President himself, who then proceeded to the Porte. The Grand Vizier, on hearing what had just taken place, went at once to the Sultan, and apparently recommended His Majesty to issue the Iradé (which reached the Porte this afternoon), proclaiming the state of siege at Constantinople, but whether partially or generally, I had no time to ascertain.

The Grand Vizier, whom I could see for a few minutes only, pointed out the danger of satisfying the demands of these public gatherings, as likely to lead to the eventual annihilation of the Sovereign and Ministerial authority. His Highness did not consequently appear to think that His Majesty the Sultan would consent to dismiss the two Ministers in presence of this Softa movement, which, he regretted to say, had been got up by a distinguished Englishman now at Constantinople. His Highness having then desired me to bring under your Excellency's notice the impro-

piety of that gentleman's connection with the proceeding, I thought proper to tell his Highness what I had stated to Safvet Pasha some days ago respecting him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 46.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 145. Political.)
Cairo, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that Prince Hassan, the Viceroy's son, left Cairo yesterday for Alexandria, whence he will embark on or about the 27th instant for Constantinople with about 6,000 troops, including four batteries of artillery. They will be transported to Turkey in Egyptian vessels and escorted by three small Egyptian men-of-war.

Owing to the late disease here among horses, there was a difficulty in providing horses for the artillery, but they are now to be purchased in Turkey.

The interest in the war has taken far greater hold upon the public here, and translations in Arabic of all news from the seat of war favourable to the Turkish arms are published daily and eagerly read by the natives, and the report of the declaration by the Sultan of a holy war against the Russians made a strong impression.

Although I see no signs whatever of fanaticism against Europeans or Christians generally, still I have advised Chérif Pasha not to allow the passions of the people to be excited by the circulation of inflammatory telegrams, and he has promised me to give orders in this sense to the police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 47.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 148. Confidential.)
Paris, June 1, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that it appeared from communications made at St. Petersburgh by Baron Jomini to General Leflô, the French Ambassador there, that it was with a view to having the means at hand of making a speedy peace that the Emperor Alexander was taking Prince Gortchakow with him to the army. In fact it seemed, the Duke said, to be implied that the Emperor Alexander was prepared to act as the Emperor Napoleon III had acted in the campaign in Italy in 1859, and to make peace immediately upon the spot, after the first marked success of his army.

As for the terms on which such a peace, if made at all, would be concluded, the Duke had no definite information. A great deal might, he thought, depend upon Austria. For his own part, he had always believed that there had been a distinct understanding between Russia and Austria; but he had been a little staggered in this belief by the announcement that confidential communications were going on between the Cabinets of London and Vienna. Still he conceived that there must be an agreement between Russia and Austria that the Russian armies were not to enter Servia. He had also had reason to think that at the last meeting between the Emperors of Austria and Russia it had been settled that, in case of war, Russia was to take back her old possessions in Bessarabia, and Austria was to annex Turkish Croatia to her dominions. It was, however, a very long time since the meeting in question, and the Duke could not take upon himself to affirm that no increase had since taken place in the pretentions of one or both of the Powers.

The Duc Decazes went on to say that it was at Constantinople that the greatest difficulties in making peace might, after all, be found. There seemed, he observed, to be such a confusion of ideas there that it was impossible to say that a party utterly ignorant and unreasonable and bent upon war might not get the upper hand. On the other side it was not improbable that a great Russian victory might produce a sudden collapse of the Turkish resolution to resist. There seemed to him to be a perfect chaos,

and he heartily wished that England or some other Power might obtain an influence at Constantinople which would give a reasonable direction to the counsels of the Porte.

The Duke did not express any apprehension lest a peace suddenly made between Russia and Turkey, under the pressure of a Russian success, might contain stipulations unfavourable to the interests of the Western Powers.

I send a copy of this despatch to-day to Mr. Layard by the Queen's messenger, Captain Player.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 48.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 2.)

(No. 103. Political.)
Bucharest, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a note addressed to me by the Moldo-Wallachian Minister for Foreign Affairs, requesting me to direct the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the reckless manner in which the Turkish military authorities are scattering torpedoes in the bed of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 48.

M. Cogalniceano to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

M. l'Agent,
Bucharest, le $\frac{14}{26}$ Mai, 1877.

LA Proclamation du Serdar Ekrem, basée sur les instructions de la Sublime Porte du $\frac{17}{29}$ Avril dernier, et dont mention a été faite dans la note circulaire que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser le $\frac{9}{18}$ Mai courant, a été suivie de mesures si peu prévoyantes, qu'il est à craindre que le Danube ne puisse servir pour longtemps après la paix au commerce international.

En effet, il résulte des renseignements digne de créance parvenus à mon Département, que les autorités Ottomanes parsèment le lit du Danube de nombreuses torpilles, sans prendre la moindre disposition pour déterminer et reconnaître plus tard l'endroit qui les recèle. Ces torpilles se trouvent ainsi jetées au hasard, et non méthodiquement posées. L'absence, de la part des autorités Ottommes, des précautions usitées en pareil cas, aura pour effet d'empêcher ces autorités elles-mêmes de retrouver et d'enlever leurs engins, le jour où les exigences de la guerre cesseraient de mettre obstacle à la navigation du Danube, et où le parcours du fleuve devrait reprendre pour le commerce toute sa sécurité.

Vous voudrez bien convenir, M. l'Agent, qu'il est d'un intérêt éminent, que le commerce international si gravement atteint déjà par les événements actuels et par les tristes nécessités qu'entraine fatalement la guerre, n'ait pas encore, après la cessation des hostilités, à souffrir d'une suspension forcée. Or cette suspension se produirait et se prolongerait indéfiniment, à l'universel dommage, si le Gouvernement Ottoman continuait à omettre les précautions de rigueur.

En conséquence, et sur la base des considérations ci-dessus exposées, j'ai l'honneur de vous prier, M. l'Agent, de vouloir bien interposer vos bons offices auprès du Cabinet Anglais en vue d'obtenir que la Sublime Porte soit invitée à donner d'urgence à ses autorités l'ordre formel d'entourer la pose des torpilles dans le lit du Danube de toutes les précautions exigées par la prévoyance la plus élémentaire.

Je ne saurais terminer la présente sans ajouter que les autorités militaires Russes ne placent leurs torpilles qu'après avoir relevé avec la plus minutieuse exactitude des points qui permettront, à un moment donné, de les reconnaître et de les retirer.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) COGALNICEANO.

No. 49.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 130.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 1, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL at Dardanelles reports that torpedoes have just been placed in Straits of Dardanelles between Sultanie and Namasghieh forts, the place at which ships usually call for pratique. They are placed in a double line of eight, each at intervals of 170 yards between torpedo and torpedo, width of passage at that point being about 1,500 yards. The torpedoes are sunk to a depth of 36 feet below the surface, and will be exploded by electricity from either shore; they present no danger or obstacle to ordinary navigation. The torpedoes have been made at Constantinople; they are very good cylinders, and are reported to contain exploding charges of from 500 to 1,000 lbs. of pellet powder.

It is contemplated to place mines between forts of Nagarah and Boraleh, about three miles above Chanak, and at the lower entrance of the Straits, between the castles of Seddul Bahr and Kum Kalé, but this work is not yet commenced.

No. 50.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Therapia, June 1, 1877, 7·15 P.M.*

I AM informed that the Sultan, when giving private audience to the German Ambassador, declared that the present war was a very iniquitous one, which he had done his best to avert, and that he had given every guarantee for the better government of his country, especially by granting the Constitution. German Ambassador expressed in reply the Emperor's deep regret at having seen it actually break out, and assured His Majesty of the Emperor's disinterestedness, as well as of his friendly feelings towards Turkey, adding that His Majesty would have occasion to judge better of their sincerity hereafter.

No. 51.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 132.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 1, 1877, 10·45 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day, I only received by messenger this morning a copy of the Austrian representation respecting freedom of navigation of the Danube, inclosed in your despatch No. 139 of the 22nd ultimo, Austrian Ambassador not having communicated it to me. A similar representation will go in from me to-morrow. I have, as your Lordship will have learnt by previous telegrams, supported verbally the representations which the Austrian Ambassador informed me he had addressed to the Porte.

No. 52.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

Washington, June 1, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day, the Russian ship-of-war at Philadelphia is the "Kraiser," described in inclosure in my despatch No. 153 of the 22nd ultimo. Russian Admiral (Crown) having suddenly gone to San Francisco, I have telegraphed to Consul to report to me by telegraph the object of his visit.

I hear positively Russian fleet from New York will call first at Flores in the Azores.

No. 53.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 1, 1877, 11·30 P.M.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY starts immediately; am I authorized to draw for his expenses?

No. 54.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 2, 1877, 11 A.M.*

TURKISH Government has been again alarmed by information from Servia that Prince Milan has been encouraged by Russia to declare war; that there is great activity in military preparations; that the first ban of the reserve has again been called out; that cartridges are being made; military roads repaired from interior to frontier; and that three Russian superior staff officers are at Belgrade or some other place. I have telegraphed this to Mr. White.

Austrian Ambassador informs me very confidentially that the Emperor of Austria has received the most solemn personal assurances from Emperor of Russia that his troops will not enter Servia, and that he will endeavour to prevent the Prince making war. His Excellency begged that this should not be repeated.

No. 55.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 2.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 2, 1877.*

THE latest information I have of Russian movement is against Kizl Ervad, not Merve. Following communicated by me yesterday to the Viceroy of India:—"Meshed Agent telegraphed yesterday there is information from Boojnoord that four Russian regiments, with 500 horses, had arrived ten days ago within two stages Kizl Ervad, the first of the Akhal encampments, with the intention of occupying the Akhal country." Captain Napier is still here, having definitely abandoned his proposed journey, as I reported in my despatch No. 61* of the 4th of May.

No. 56.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 2, 1877, 4 P.M.*

IT is not clear from your telegram of 31st whether Austrian Ambassador has agreed to conditions on which Porte offers to allow neutral vessels to ascend Danube, or what the measures are which Austrian Government cannot accept. Please explain, and if the matter is not already settled continue to urge that the permission be granted.

No. 57.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 3.*)

(No. 24. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, May 19, 1877.*

THE third sitting of the Cretan General Assembly was held on the 15th instant. On this occasion the Christian Deputies handed in to the President a list of demands, of which I have the honour to inclose a translation.

Your Lordship will observe that the Deputies reiterate their demand for those

* Not yet received.

modifications in the Organic Law which they had vainly sought to obtain last year. This is their main contention with the Government. But a new source of alarm and distrust has arisen since the promulgation of the new Ottoman Constitution, which seems to menace the very existence of their special Charter. For inasmuch as no mention is made in that Constitution of any privileged provinces to which its provisions do not apply, it might reasonably be inferred that the rights confirmed to the Cretans by their special Charter were held to be merged in those contained in the general one. This apprehension explains the refusal of the Christians to vote for the two members destined to represent their country in the Parliament sitting in the capital, and they now decline to acknowledge the right to a seat there of the Mussulman member who was elected by the inhabitants of the rival creed. In the Firman appointing Samih Pasha Governor of Crete, a translation of which accompanied my despatch No. 11 of the 3rd ultimo, Crete was not mentioned as a privileged province, and his Excellency endeavoured to quiet the apprehensions of the islanders on this score by promising to respect their rights as embodied in the Organic Law. It is natural that this verbal declaration of the Governor should not satisfy the Cretan Christians, who therefore formulate the following four demands:—

1. That the Constitution shall not be applicable to Crete by virtue of its character as a privileged province.

2. That the validity of the Organic Law, widened in its scope by the modifications now sought to be introduced therein, shall be guaranteed by a special Firman.

3. That that Firman shall not be submitted to the Constantinople Chamber of Deputies for its approbation.

4. That every decision, modification, or addition, having reference to the Organic Law, shall be made by the General Assembly, regard being had to the needs, the desires, and the state of the country.

The Deputies finally declare that until they receive a definitive answer to the claims thus put forward, they decline to occupy themselves with any work during the present session; and, in particular, they refuse to elect the members of the Administrative Council and the Judges of the Court of Appeal, those now acting in those posts, to which they were appointed by the authorities, not being, in their eyes, legally elected, their acts, consequently, being devoid of legality.

These demands, which would have lost none of their force had they been drawn up in more respectful language, were received in silence by the President, Samih Pasha, who undertook to forward them to his Government without any comments of his own. As the Porte absolutely refused to make the slightest concession last year, it is not likely that it will be in a more compliant mood now, but weeks will probably elapse before any answer is vouchsafed. Meanwhile the sittings of the Assembly are suspended, while the Members remain in town, awaiting the Porte's reply.

The following day a deputation of several Christian Members of the Assembly waited on the Governor, and presented him with a petition praying for the dismissal of the Mussulman Mushaver (Councillor) Mustafa Nouri Pasha. This functionary was for several years Mutessarif Pasha of Candia, and signalized his administration there by many petty acts of bigotry, which earned him the hatred and distrust of the entire Christian population. His recent appointment as Mussulman Councillor was certainly not a judicious one.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 57.

The Representatives of the Christian Population of Crete to Samih Pasha.

(Traduction.)
La Canée, le $\frac{25 \text{ Avril}}{7 \text{ Mai}}$, 1877.

Excellence,

LES Députés Chrétiens formant la majorité de l'Assemblée Générale de l'Ile de Crète pour l'année 1876, avaient, avec l'autorisation du Gouvernement, formulé par écrit une série de demandes tendant à: compléter la Loi Organique; empêcher autant que possible et sous tous les rapports, la mauvaise administration; établir une égalité réelle entre les habitants; et favoriser la juste repartition des emplois.

Ces demandes furent rejetées par le Gouvernement, que ne tint aucun compte de la justice.

Cette même majorité considérant la Crète comme une province privilégiée et devant jouir de l'administration spéciale qui a été accordée au pays, a déclaré qu'elle ne consentait pas admettre la Crète au nombre des provinces qui seraient à l'avenir administrées selon la Constitution future.

Après la promulgation de la Constitution tout le peuple de l'Ile protesta encore spontanément et énergiquement par écrit contre l'assimilation que le Gouvernement général cherchait à faire pour la Crète, comme du reste votre Excellence ne l'ignore pas.

C'est de droit qu'aucun habitant Chrétien n'a voulu accepter la nomination d'un Député Crétois pour Constantinople, et nous ne reconnaissons pas comme notre représentant le Député Musulman nommé par les membres Musulmans du Conseil Administratif.

La promesse verbale qu'a donnée votre Excellence que la Loi Organique serait appliquée dans toutes ses parties ne peut être acceptée par nous, ayant la mission de représenter seulement la population Chrétienne de l'Ile, cette promesse ne nous garantissant pas suffisamment l'application exacte et durable de la Loi Organique. En pareille matière, un engagement du Gouvernement formel et par écrit est de rigueur.

D'autre part, considérant que la charte octroyée ne fait aucune mention de la Crète comme province privilégiée, et l'assimile par conséquent aux autres provinces de l'Empire Ottoman, nous soussignés, représentants de la population Chrétienne de l'Ile, vu cette dernière considération, soumettons au Gouvernement par l'entremise de votre Excellence les demandes suivantes:—

1. Que la Constitution ne soit pas applicable à l'Ile de Crète, étant une province privilégiée.

2. Que l'application de la Loi Organique soit assurée par un Firman spécial qui contiendrait en outre les dispositions complémentaires et les modifications formulées par la majorité de l'Assemblée de l'année dernière.

3. Que le sus-dit Firman ne soit pas soumis pour l'approbation de la Chambre des Députés de Constantinople.

4. Que toute décision, modification ou adjonction ayant rapport à la Loi Organique soit faite par l'Assemblée Crétoise selon les besoins, les désirs, et l'état du pays.

En soumettant ce qui précède au Gouvernement Impérial par votre entremise, nous informons votre Excellence de ce qu'avant de recevoir une réponse définitive nous ne pourrons procéder aux élections ni nous livrer à aucun autre travail de notre mission durant la session présente, et de ce que nous ne reconnaissons pas comme légalement élus les membres de la Cour d'Appel et du Conseil Administratif nommés d'office par le Gouvernement général, et que par suite leurs actes judiciaires ou administratifs sont illégaux à nos yeux.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) Les Représentants de la Population Chrétienne de l'Ile de Crète.

No. 58.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 3.*)

(No. 91. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, May 27, 1877.*

M. DELIGEORGES has had the kindness to send to me the accompanying extracts from reports which he has lately received from the Hellenic Consuls at Larissa and Volo, containing some painful details respecting the deplorable state of affairs upon the Ottoman side of the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure 1 in No. 58.

The Greek Consul at Larissa to M. Deligeorges.

(Extrait.) *Larisse, le* 11 *Mai*, 1877.

DERNIÈREMENT la sécurité publique a été gravement compromise par les nombreux meurtres, actes de brigandage, et vexations qui se commettent journellement dans notre ville.

Un grand nombre de gardes-frontières ayant déserté se sont adonnés au brigandage et en général les gardes-frontières, ayant à recevoir des arriérés de solde de deux années et ne pouvant pas pourvoir à leur subsistance, entrent dans les villages sous prétexte de se procurer des vivres et dévalisent les paysans. A Agrafa, des gardes-frontières déserteurs ont massacré dans un couvent un moine et une religieuse et ont enlevé 200 livres et tous les vases sacrés. Dans le village de Nerassia ils ont arrêté un paysan qui a pu leur échapper, et à Zurata ils ont mis la main sur un prêtre au moment où il sortait de l'église après l'office, mais les paysans étant intervenus ils ont dû le laisser libre. A Canalia ils ont essayé de pénétrer de force dans la maison d'un paysan qui a fait feu sur eux et en a blessé un.

Cette situation déplorable va empirer de plus en plus, attendu que les autorités Ottomanes ne poursuivent pas ces gardes-frontières, de peur de les exciter et d'augmenter la désertion.

Indépendemment des méfaits commis pas les gardes-frontières nous avons à enregistrer d'autres crimes et actes de brigandage. Dans le village de Dikely, situé à une distance de quatre heures de la capitale, des inconnus ayant arrêté le Maire de l'endroit, l'ont torturé pour lui arracher de l'argent et puis ils l'ont tué.

Il y a trois jours, un garde national a blessé grièvement un Juif et hier encore, quatre Musulmans qu'on suppose être gardes-nationaux ayant à leur tête un Arabe, ont arrêté huit paysans et, après leur avoir enlevé 100 livres, ils ont coupé la main de l'un d'eux et ont mortellement blessé un autre.

Une grande panique règne parmi les Chrétiens à cause du manque de sécurité et des dangers continuels auxquels sont exposés leur vie et leur fortune. Par conséquent, nous avons dû faire des représentations à cet égard de concert avec le Consul d'Angleterre, et, nous étant rendus hier chez le Gouverneur, nous avons attiré son attention sur ces faits déplorables qui se produisent successivement et nous avons démontré la nécessité de prendre les mesures les plus énergiques pour remédier à cette triste situation.

Inclosure 2 in No. 58.

The Greek Vice-Consul at Volo to M. Deligeorges.

Volo, le 12 *Mai*, 1877.

(Extrait.)

J'AI l'honneur de vous annoncer, M. le Président, que d'après des informations qui sont émanées de bonne source et que j'ai reçu d'Armyro la semaine passé, cinq gendarmes et seize gardes-frontières ayant déserté leurs postes à Armyro et à Sourpi, ont formé une bande et se sont adonnés au brigandage; ce qui les y poussa c'est que pendant deux ans ils n'avaient pas touché leur solde et que leur ration même leur faisait parfois défaut. Tous les fournisseurs de l'armée ont donné leur démission, attendu que le papier-monnaie est extrêmement déprécié et qu'il n'existe ici aucune autre monnaie, tout le numéraire étant expédié à Constantinople. Si cet état de choses dure encore, il est à craindre que les soldats n'enlèvent de force les provisions dont ils auront besoin.

Le brigandage, qui prend chaque jour plus d'extension, exposera à de grands dangers les Chrétiens qui habitent l'intérieur de la Thessalie, car dès qu'ils résisteront à main armée aux bandits ils seront qualifiés d'insurgés, et la force publique surviendra pour achever l'œuvre de destruction; elle aura pour auxiliaires les brigands eux-mêmes, puisque ceux-ci peuvent dévaliser les Chrétiens et servir en même temps comme soldats, nul ne leur demandant compte d'une pareille conduite.

Le premier mouvement qu'ils regarderont comme insurrectionnel, les Turcs sont résolus à le réprimer de la manière la plus implacable, afin d'intimider les Chrétiens et de les forcer ainsi à demeurer soumis et tranquilles. Ainsi les Chrétiens seront dévalisés par les brigands sans leur opposer aucune résistance, de peur de s'attirer des calamités encore plus effrayantes et plus terribles.

Le Vice-Consul d'Angleterre, venu aujourd'hui de Larisse, m'a appris ce qui suit: des bandis Ottomans, de ceux qui étaient gardes-frontières (houndout) et qui ont déserté, ont envahi un monastère à Agrapha, massacré le Supérieur, enlevé ses effets, ainsi que tout ce qu'ils ont trouvé dans le dit couvent, et jusqu'aux vases sacrés de son église. Quelques maçons, Chrétiens, au nombre de quinze environ, ayant quitté Armyro pour retourner à Larisse, passaient la nuit dans un petit village situé à proximité de cette ville; lorsque quatre Turcs, dont l'un était nègre, les ont attaqués, torturés et dévalisés; ils en ont même mutilé deux, dont l'un a eu le poignet coupé.

Un Juif retournait à Larisse; son muletier était Chrétien; entrés dans la ville et arrivés près de l'endroit où est cantonnée la milice urbaine, ils ont été attaqués par des Turcs qui les ont blessés l'un et l'autre dangereusement. A Larisse l'effroi des habitants est tel qu'aussitôt le soleil couché, toutes les boutiques ferment et que pas un Chrétien ne sort de chez lui dès qu'il commence à faire nuit. M. Suter a ajouté que, de concert avec M. Palamidis, il avait fait à ce sujet des représentations au Gouverneur et que celui-ci avait promis de prendre des mesures énergiques en vue de découvrir les coupables et de prévenir de nouveaux méfaits; toutefois, on avait bien peu d'espoir, m'a-t-il dit, en ce qui concerne la continuation du maintien de l'ordre dans l'intérieur, par conséquent beaucoup de familles sont venues ici de Larisse dans la journée d'hier.

Les autorités locales manquant d'argent tout-à-fait, elles hâtent donc d'une manière très vexatoire la rentrée des impôts; quiconque en doit est mis en prison et n'est relaxé qu'après avoir payé. Et si l'on poursuit pour cette année la perception d'impôts doubles conformément à la décision qui en a été prise à Constantinople la situation des Chrétiens deviendra désespérante.

No. 59.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 23. Political. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Odessa, May* 27, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that a sotnia (100 men) of Circassian cavalry returned here to-day from the Danube, and three more sotnias are expected to-morrow.

According to General Sinika, the Commander-in-chief of the Odessa Military district, they have been sent away from the army in disgrace, having pillaged Wallachian property.

The belief generally expressed among Russian society is, that in consequence of the unexpected revolt in the Caucasus they are distrusted, and it is thought imprudent to allow them to be with the army, especially at the time when the Emperor will be with it.

I believe this to be the true explanation.

The majority of these men are Mussulmans, and are the volunteers from the Ferek country.

They are in great distress of mind, denying the charges, demanding that they be proved, and asking that every tenth man among them be shot, and the remainder sent back to the Caucasus, but not that they be distributed among Russian garrison towns.

It is very unlikely they will be at present sent to their country, but what is to be done with them is as yet unknown, or kept secret.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

No. 60.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 3.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June* 2, 1877.

WITH reference to your telegram of the 26th of May, I learned by telegram yesterday from Meshed Agent that the Persian troops now on duty in Khorassan are two and a half regiments regular infantry and two local regiments in Kayn and Seistan. There are twelve guns in the latter districts and thirteen in Meshed. This information communicated in detail to the Government of India.

No. 61.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

Scutari, June 2, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

THIS morning Turkish forces at Podgoritza assumed the offensive, and are marching into Montenegro.

Telegraph in that [sense ?] to Constantinople.

No. 62.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 134.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 2, 1877, 11·45 P.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day I have been constantly urging the Porte, in accord with the Austrian Ambassador, to allow neutral vessels to ascend the Danube. I have this moment heard from him that the Porte has at last consented. The conditions agreed to by the Austrian Government are that such vessels shall not be destined for Russian service, and that they shall not carry contraband of war; and in order to secure fulfilment of these conditions, Austrian Government consent that vessels belonging to Austrians shall be searched by Turkish authorities at Adakale. The measures stated in my telegram that Austrian Government cannot accept, are those which the Porte had hitherto determined to enforce to prevent neutral vessels from ascending the river. I quoted words of Austrian note, a copy of which has been sent to your Lordship yesterday. I trust that the question is now finally settled, but there has been great disagreement on the subject in the Turkish Cabinet.

No. 63.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 135.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 2, 1877, 11·55 P.M.

GENERAL KEMBALL telegraphs following, dated Hintz, this morning:—

"General retreat of Turkish forces has been reported. No news from Kars. It is time Mukhtar Pasha should declare his final resolution, and Porte should determine plan, particularly in respect to Trebizond and guns *en route*. From the comparison of the forces, and the unprepared state of the Turks, I conclude it is not Mukhtar Pasha's intention to defend Erzeroum."

No. 64.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 136.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 3, 1877, 1 A.M.

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum:—

"Muktar Pasha will retire to-day ( ). Van corps has been ordered to join him immediately, with available force at Toprak Kalé or ( ). Olti corps has been ordered to retire at once to Gorgehogas. Mukhtar Pasha may concentrate about fifty battalions for defence of Erzeroum, but he is very weak in field artillery and cavalry. Circassians were severely handled by Russian cavalry on Wednesday in Kars plain. Troops here insubordinate. Complain of being insufficiently and badly fed and clothed, and not paid. Barracks had to be closed on Wednesday to prevent disturbance. 600 deserters brought here on Wednesday and sent back to their battalions. Flying parties of Cossacks have penetrated to Olti, purpose to calm inhabitants, and prevent their fleeing. Copies of the Russian Proclamation have been left in the villages, but no one dares to show them yet."

No. 65.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburgh, June 3, 1877, 2·30 P.M.

EMPEROR OF RUSSIA accompanied by Czarovitch and Grand Duke Serge left yesterday evening for the headquarters of army. Count Schouvaloff will leave to-morrow, stop day at Berlin to see Emperor William, and arrive in London Friday next. He has been instructed not to divulge nature of answer of which he is bearer until it has been communicated to your Lordship. He thinks and hopes that it will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

Colonel Wellesley leaves for headquarters Tuesday.

No. 66.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Very Confidential.)

Vienna, June 3, 1877, 3·30 P.M.

AS the Austrian Ambassador has communicated to your Lordship the answer of the Austrian Government to your note of the 19th, Count Andrassy has been good enough to authorize its being read to me to-day.

No. 67.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 137.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 3, 1877, 12·30 P.M.

FOLLOWING from Consul at Erzeroum:—

"On 27th Moukhtar Pasha, to prevent Circassians revolting, permitted them to try to succour Kars. They left head-quarters with Mussa Pasha early Monday, reached Bendli Achmet and contiguous villages in Kars plain same afternoon. Russians being apprized surrounded the village during the night with infantry and cavalry. At dawn onset began; in a short time but few Circassians remained, no quarter being given. It is believed of 1,500 Circassians not more than 400 escaped. Their Pasha is missing. Moukhtar Pasha is now without cavalry, and his position is critical. He has retired to Zevin, but having no cavalry, it is doubtful if he can continue retreat to Kenprikeui, as Russian cavalry from activity observed in the camp is evidently making a forward movement, probably to force Soghauli Dagh. Carts have been sent from Olti to transport Commander-in-chief's camp."

No. 68.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 4.)

(No. 54. Political.)

My Lord,

Belgrade, May 14, 1877.

ON my return here the day before yesterday I ascertained that Colonel Catardgi, maternal uncle to Prince Milan, had been sent a second time by the Prince on a secret mission to the head-quarters of the Russian army, having only returned from his first mission to Kischeneff about ten days ago.

It is, of course, impossible to ascertain with precision the real object of Colonel Catardgi's journeys, but I believe I shall not be far wrong in saying that the Servian Government are desirous of ascertaining from Russia what *rôle* is assigned to the Principality in future arrangements in the Balkanic Peninsula, what co-operation is assigned to her, and what ultimate advantages are to be expected by Servia for having hitherto been guided almost exclusively by Russian councils.

I cannot say that I find any strong disposition here to resume a hostile attitude to the Porte, but there prevails a certain uneasy political feeling; the Servians, having persuaded themselves that they were destined to become a Slavic Piedmont, and having rushed recklessly into war last year with a view to fulfil some such mission, begin to

fear that their inaction at present may, in the eyes of the Russian Government and people, annul and cancel all their former claims and leave them in the shade.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 69.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 55. Political.) *Belgrade, May 15, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Russian Agent and Consul-General, M. Kartzov, had an audience of the Prince of Servia on Friday, the 11th instant, both for the purpose of taking leave of His Highness on his being recalled from his present post, and also for making an official communication to the Prince on behalf of the Imperial Government.

The latter was, I am assured, to the following purpose:—

His Majesty the Emperor considers that he has no occasion for the co-operation of Servia in the task which he has taken in hand. His Majesty thinks that Servia had better remain quiet, but leaves the Prince sole judge of what he has to do, warning him that he will have to assume the full responsibility of his acts.

The message delivered was, it appears, to that effect, and contained some allusion also to the previous faults towards the Emperor committed by Servia.

On the following day (the 12th instant) Colonel Catardgi was despatched a second time to the Russian head-quarters.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 70.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 56. Political.) *Belgrade, May 17, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship the final departure from his post in Servia of M. Kartzov, the Russian Diplomatic Agent and Consul-General, who has been recalled by his Government, and is to have no successor at present.

Since his arrival here in May, 1875, up to last February, M. Kartzov had exercised immense influence in the affairs of this Principality; he had succeeded in persuading most Servians, possessing influence, that they must submit to Russian guidance and dictation as the most beneficial for the realization of their patriotic and national aspirations.

At the same time M. Kartzov represented himself at all times as the sole interpreter and exponent of Russian policy and views even on occasions when the official language of his own Government, and of its Ambassadors at other Courts, could be naturally supposed to convey a different sound; and hence there arose, on several occasions, differences between him and M. Ristitch.

The latter never enjoyed, as Minister, the full confidence of the Russian Court, and he had had frequent collisions with the Russian officers and delegates who came to Servia during the last twelve months. On the eve of the convocation of the Grand "Skouptchina" in February last, M. Kartzov urged the Prince, in a most dictatorial tone, to remove M. Ristitch from office, and constitute a different Ministry.

Prince Milan took offence at last, and from that moment M. Kartzov ceased to be a visitor at the Palace; and His Highness instructed his uncle, Colonel Catardgi, to complain to the Emperor Alexander at Kishenetf of the conduct of his Agent here, and this gentleman has been recalled from Servia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 71.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 57. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May 19, 1877.*

FROM information received here it appears that the Slavonic Agents in Bosnia have been instructed not to do anything at present which might tend to the spread of the insurrection in that province, and they have been advised from Russia at the same time, not to obstruct any existing disposition in favour of an annexation to Austria which is supposed to have gained adherents in a few Bosnian districts.

These new tactics appeared to me deserving of your Lordship's notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 72.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 59. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that considerable military activity had been noticed in Servia about a fortnight ago, but that much less is visible at the present moment.

All men belonging to the first class Militia are told to hold themselves in readiness, but no considerable force of infantry is concentrated anywhere.

At the time when military preparations were it appears immediately contemplated, Prince Milan sent to the Russian head-quarters at Kischeneff, where the Emperor was present at the time, a relative of his, Colonel Catardgi, on a special mission, which consisted, it appears, in inquiries as to Russia's intentions concerning Servia, and also in complaints of M. Kartzov, the Russian Agent and Consul-General in Servia.

This gentleman has been recalled since by his Government, but on taking final leave of Prince Milan he was instructed by Prince Gortchakow to communicate to His Highness in a very decisive tone that the Imperial Government expects no co-operation from Servia and recommends her to keep quiet.

On the day following the delivery of this message by M. Kartzov, and notwithstanding its discouraging tone, the Prince sent Colonel Catardgi a second time to the Grand Duke Nicholas, and it remains to be seen whether this second mission will produce a different result.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 73.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 60. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May 21, 1877.*

TWO subjects are principally attracting attention in Servia. The first question on which deep interest is felt is connected with the intention attributed to Prince Milan to seek for an opportunity to visit the Emperor of Russia when His Majesty returns to the army on the 6th June / 25th May (o.s.) next.

The other subject is one of local interest only: it is the question of convocation of the Skouptchina, or Legislative Assembly, for an ordinary Session.

As regards the absence of the Prince for the purpose of visiting the Emperor of Russia, there can be no doubt that His Highness' personal inclinations are very much in that direction. The Prince and his immediate adherents feel that, for some reason or other, the Russian Court has lately shown itself discontented with them. There is a general apprehension in the country that, if this Principality "is excluded from the plan of Russian war operations," as has been stated with some show of authority, it may also later be excluded from all consideration when peace is negotiated; that, in such

a case, the people would hold the Prince and his present Ministers wholly responsible, not only for the wasting of so many sacrifices during the late war, but for gross dereliction of duty.

It is felt, moreover, that a good deal of the coldness ostensibly shown by Russia to her old *protégé*, Servia, is due to the necessity of proper regard for the interests and wishes of Austria, and it is thought that the presence of the Emperor Alexander with his army, surrounded, as he will be, by so many of his Slavophile advisers, is perhaps the last favourable opportunity that may present itself for a long time for Prince Milan to induce his Imperial patron to reconsider his views and intentions with regard to Servia.

Hitherto there is no indication to show that the Emperor is disposed to receive Prince Milan.

There is a strong desire in the country that the Skouptchina should be consulted without delay, but no date has, as yet, been fixed by the Government for its convocation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 74.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 4.)

(No. 61. Political.) *Belgrade, May* 24, 1877.

My Lord,

AS the subject of Servia being left out from the Russian war operations is a sore point with many patriotic Slavs, it may be of some interest to your Lordship to hear what happened to be the views of the Russian Government with regard to Servian co-operation in December, 1876.

At that time General Nikitin (Chief of the staff of the Wilna district) came to Belgrade with full powers to negotiate a Military Convention with Servia on principles similar to those according to which Russia has negotiated since a Convention with Prince Charles of Roumania.

Russia was, I understand, to guarantee a pecuniary subsidy to Servia.

Objections were entertained at the time by the Servian Government to some stipulations by which very considerable authority was to be vested in Russian Commanders, who were to have the control of the Servian troops, and of many other matters.

General Nikitin showed very great ill-humour, the negotiations were broken off, and he was suddenly recalled, and Russian agents have since pointed out this circumstance as one of the sins of Prince Milan which has not been condoned by Russia.

If I may venture, however, to express an opinion on the reason of General Nikitin's recall, and of the abandonment of the projected Convention at that particular time, I am disposed to assign it to a different cause from that which it suits political agents to give to their Servian friends.

On the 5th of January, General Ignatiew communicated to the Marquis of Salisbury the summary of terms called afterwards the irreducible minimum.

On the 9th of January General Nikitin was ordered to leave Belgrade, breaking off the negotiations, and he and his staff took their departure on the following day.

I can hardly believe this to have been a simple coincidence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 75.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 4.)

(No. 62. Political.) *Belgrade, May* 25, 1877.

My Lord,

THE employment of well-known Slavophils in an official capacity by the Commander-in-chief of the Russian forces on the Danube are watched with intense interest here.

Besides my old Warsaw friend Prince Vladimir Cherkásski, two prominent members of the Slav Moscow Committee are attached to the Grand Duke.

Under these, four Civil Departments are being organized for the future administration of Bulgaria.

M. Narishkin, an agent of the Slave Central Committee, lately employed here by that body, has been transferred to this new organization.

It is impossible to shut one's eyes to the influence which may be exercised on the Emperor and on the most influential public men in Russia by constant contact with persons holding such views.

The Prussian correspondent of the "Times" has given, under the title "Slavonic Missionaries in Bulgaria," interesting extracts on this subject, which I can recommend to your Lordship's attention. It has appeared in the "Times" of May 21, p. 7.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 76.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 4.)

(No. 64. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May* 25, 1877.

BOTH the feeling existing amongst the population of Servia, and the exhausted condition of her Exchequer, render it not at all likely that Servia should, of her own accord, seek to renew hostilities with the Porte; but unfortunately, notwithstanding these presumptions in favour of the preservation of peace, it is generally expected here that the Principality will be ere long dragged into the war by Russia.

It is impossible to explain in any other way the preparations which are quietly and imperceptibly carried on. The recruits are being drilled, the militiamen are registered anew, and the different staffs are reorganized; all these measures may be explained away as insignificant, but they are indications that a summons on the part of Russia would be willingly followed.

Apparently the only security against such a contingency is afforded by the regard hitherto entertained by Russia for the views of Austria, which would be sure to object strongly to the war extending to Servian territory.

But the objections of Austria, although well known to Russian diplomacy, ought to be pointed out here by that Power in a much stronger and decisive way than they have been indicated here, as far as it is known.

If this is not done whilst there is yet time, it may be soon too late. When once the peace is broken things will have to take their course.

It is evident that an opinion is gaining ground here that Austrian menaces may be disregarded, whilst, on the other hand, it is hoped that the Slavonic influences which have latterly been so powerful with the Emperor of Russia, will again, at a critical moment, make themselves felt in a way favourable to the Servian cause, and to her being allowed to co-operate in this struggle.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 77.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 4.)

(No. 65. Political.)

My Lord, *Belgrade, May* 26, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Count de Rochechouart, my French colleague, went to see Prince Milan to-day under instructions from the Duke Decazes, and communicated confidentially to His Highness the text of a communication of a very serious nature which Austria, France, and Great Britain had agreed to make to Prince Charles of Roumania on the subject of the recent declarations made by that Prince.

Count de Rochechouart was further instructed to comment on the agreement between these three Powers, and to draw from it the inference that any disregard of existing obligations might have fatal consequences for Prince Milan. The Count

begged me to consider the information he gave me as given in the strictest confidence.

In my telegram of yesterday's date to your Lordship (extended in No. 64, Political,) I have stated my opinion, I may say my conviction, that the only Power which can yet exercise any influence here in the way of checking Servian imprudence is Austria-Hungary, and that even that Power can do nothing efficacious by mere remonstrance, unless she is prepared to state how far she is disposed to resent any disregard of her recommendations.

Any other language, or any observations or even threats of Powers so far off as England or France are purely a wasting of words in this case.

With the uncertainty which exists as to the views which may ultimately prevail at Vienna, and in the absence of any appearance of symptoms of coercion from that quarter, Prince Milan will be guided solely by the suggestions which may reach his ear from the headquarters of the Grand Duke Nicolas at Ploiesti or Bucharest.

He has quite sufficient reason to keep quiet, without any more warnings, if he is so disposed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 78.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 66. Political.)
Belgrade, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is impossible to ascertain whether Prince Milan intends really to go to Ploiesti to pay his respects to the Emperor of Russia, but the probability is that he intends going there, and that he is bent on this journey if it be only possible. Such is the opinion of several of my colleagues.

It does not follow that a rupture with the Porte need follow immediately after this visit, but should Russian or Roumanian detachments appear on Servian soil skirting the Serb frontier, or a large corps pass Widdin, the precarious neutrality of this Principality would be in imminent danger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 79.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 108. Political.)
Bucharest, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that great assiduity is being exercised in the enrolment of Bulgarian volunteers.

It is reported to me that there are already as many as 25,000 on the lists, but the figure seems to me somewhat excessive.

At this time of year great numbers of Bulgarians always come to this country, and remain the whole summer engaged in agricultural labour, returning home after the maize harvest, which is much later than that of other cereals; and it would appear that it is from this class that the Bulgarian Committee are drawing their recruits.

I understand that upwards of 2,000 are already equipped and armed, the force being encamped and distributed in the villages in the neighbourhood of Ploiesti, the head-quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 80.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 32. Consular.)
Bosna-Serai, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that Mahzar Pasha, the newly-appointed Governor of Bosnia, arrived here on the 18th instant, and that Nasif Pasha left for Constantinople on the 21st.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 81.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 467.)
Vienna, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of yesterday, I have the honour to inform you that I addressed a letter last night to Count Andrassy, requesting him, as instructed by your Lordship, to be good enough to direct the Austrian Ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople to communicate to Her Majesty's Representatives in those capitals a copy of the instructions addressed to them by his Excellency on the 6th instant, respecting the free navigation of the Danube.

I have also seen Baron Calice on this subject to-day, when he informed me that Count Andrassy had desired him, in compliance with your Lordship's wishes, to forward at once the instructions in question by telegraph.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 82.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 469. Confidential.)
Vienna, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

INFORMATION having been received here of the Roumanian Government having determined to declare the independence of the Principality, I am told that Count Andrassy looks upon such an act as provisionally unimportant, inasmuch as the future position of the Danubian Provinces must be regulated in concert by the Powers on the close of the war now existing between Russia and Turkey.

His Excellency is said, however, to have some doubt as to how far a declaration of war by the present Government at Bucharest will entitle Roumania to be recognized as a belligerent.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 83.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 484. Very Confidential.)
Vienna, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

THE French Ambassador informs me that, having recently had some conversation with Count Andrassy with respect to the eventualities that might arise out of the war between Russia and Turkey, which Her Majesty's Government have declared would be injurious to the interests of Great Britain, he had inquired whether Austria-Hungary had not also interests which might be affected by the possible consequences of the war.

Count Andrassy, however, would not specify any point which he would consider of vital importance to Austria, and evaded direct answers to the question put to him by observing that there were various solutions of the question, which it was impossible

at present to define, and as Count Vogüé replied there could only be two—either that the object of the war would be limited to the emancipation of the Christians, or that it would terminate in conquests which might involve the partition of the Turkish territories in Europe, his Excellency merely observed that Russia professed to have made war on chivalrous principles, and it might be hoped she would act upon them when the terms of peace come to be considered.

Count Vogüé then mentioned to me that Prince Gortchakow is said to have stated, with regard to the objections made by Her Majesty's Government to the advance of a Russian army to Constantinople, that it is impossible for the Russian Government to engage not to occupy that capital, as military considerations might render its occupation indispensable, but in the event of its being occupied, it would be evacuated as soon as circumstances would permit.

I answered that my own experience in frequent instances, which I could quote to him, of the inability of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs and of the Emperor himself to fulfil promises honestly given to carry out similar intentions, which I believed to have been conscientiously entertained, convinced me that such declarations could not be relied on, and I could not conceive it possible that any Russian Government in possession of Constantinople could relinquish their conquest or disappoint the nation of the long-cherished object of its ambition to re-establish Christian worship within the walls of St. Sophia.

I have thought it right to report this conversation to your Lordship, as Count Vogüé may possibly have obtained his information from Count Andrassy, who expressed an opinion to me yesterday that no importance ought to be attached to the occupation of Constantinople by the Russian army.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 84.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 486.) *Vienna, May 31, 1877.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Freeman's Report, of which a copy was inclosed in Mr. Consul Holmes' despatch to your Lordship No. 45 of the 15th instant, I am assured that, according to information in the possession of the Austrian-Hungarian Government, the number of insurgents under the command of Desplovitch, if all the bands into which they are divided could be collected, would not amount to 1,000 men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 85.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 275. Confidential.) *St. Petersburgh, May 27, 1877.*
My Lord,

I HAD a visit from Count Schouvaloff this morning; his Excellency informed me that M. Novikow, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, was expected to arrive this evening.

I believe that the Imperial Cabinet are awaiting his presence here in order to take a final decision in regard to the answer to be given to your Lordship's note to Count Schouvaloff before his departure from London.

Count Schouvaloff stated that he should leave for England on Sunday next, the 3rd of June, and that he hopes that the explanations with which he will be charged will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

In the course of conversation, he expressed an opinion that the question relating to the Dardanelles could not be treated by Russia and Turkey alone, but in concert with Europe.

He stated that the terms of a future peace would be concerted with the European Powers.

In referring to the declaration of Roumanian independence, Count Schouvaloff stated that it was disapproved by the Imperial Government, and that Russia would take no step in regard to it without the European concert.

In the course of our conversation (which was purely of a private and not of an official character), I could perceive that doubts are entertained here of ultimately obtaining the concert of Austria to granting autonomy to the Christian provinces in Turkey, and that it is feared that England will be influenced by the counsels of Austria. On the other hand, the assurances given to Count Schouvaloff by Prince Bismarck, on his late visit to Friederichsruhe, appeared to be so favourable to Russia that his Excellency's only doubt was as to how far they would be fulfilled.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 86.

Consul Sir C. Sebright to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 7. Political.)
My Lord, *Corfu, May 30, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt by the mail from Brindisi of the 28th instant of Sir Julian Pauncefote's despatch No. 1, Political, relative to the expediency of appointing a Consular Agent at Avlona in view of threatened insurrectionary movements in that quarter.

We are so close upon Albania here, and communications are so frequent by means of country boats, with all the ports on the coast from Durazzo down to Prevesa, that it would be affectation in me to plead ignorance of the spirit of disaffection towards the Turkish rule which prevails among the Christian and, in some degree, among the Mussulman population along the seaboard of the province.

The danger of any immediate outbreak lies on the side of Chimara, in the most inaccessible parts of which there are eight populous villages which no Turk is allowed to inhabit, and seven others on the mountain slopes towards Avlona, where only an Aga and a very few Turks are allowed to reside.

The natives of Chimara are the handsomest among all the Albanian tribes; born soldiers, and proverbially brave. Thus much I may venture to say from my own experience, as I had some sixty of them in my police, when an attempt at insurrection was made in Cephalonia in 1843, on which occasion they behaved with the greatest gallantry.

They could, I calculate, turn out from 2,000 to 3,000 fighting men, who, as the nucleus of an insurgent force, would in all probability, prove an overmatch for any body of troops the Turkish Government could, under present circumstances, bring into the field against them.

That means are being at present used to stir up the Chimariots to rebellion, there can be no doubt whatever. But still the reports of agitation existing in their district may be exaggerated. Had I the means of communicating with them, I should speedily find out the truth, but I have none, nor, unfortunately, do I know anyone who could be entrusted with such a mission. It would be difficult to find a proper person. To do any good he ought to appear as a traveller or a trader. In the latter character he would enjoy the greatest facilities for gathering correct information, although he might have to spend a little money in the service, and even then he would be liable to be imposed upon, unless he could talk the languages—Greek, Turkish, and Illyrian—spoken in the country, so as to be able himself to communicate immediately with the natives, for it is next to impossible to get any important information out of those people when an interpreter has to be employed, as they dread being betrayed. Besides, it strikes me that whatever political intelligence a special agent might succeed in obtaining, must lose much of its value from the length of time that it would take to reach Janina, now especially that no telegraphic messages, unless drawn up in Turkish, are transmissible.

I trust your Lordship will not deem me too presumptuous if I venture to express an opinion that the wisest policy the Ottoman Government could pursue would be to buy over the Chimariots at any price, for as long as they remain quiet the rest of that part of the country is not likely to move, and could they be induced to enlist in the new corps of gendarmerie, said to be in course of formation, their services would, without a doubt, prove invaluable.

The Turks at this moment require to concentrate all their disposable force on the

Greek frontier, where heaven and earth are being moved to get up mischief, and a hostile rising in upper Albania, supported by the Chimariots, would in all likelihood lead to the loss of the province.

I humbly crave your Lordship's forgiveness if in having ventured to indulge in the above remarks I have transgressed the limits of my proper attributions, and with the highest respect, I have, &c.

(Signed) CHARLES SEBRIGHT.

No. 87.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 224.) *Berlin, June 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

A CORRESPONDENCE has passed between the German Government and the Swiss Minister in Berlin, in consequence of which Swiss subjects and interests in Turkey remain under the protection of Germany.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 88.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 225. Confidential.) *Berlin, June 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

MAJORS VON LEIGNITZ and Count Wedel, of the Staff, Major Von Villaume, of the Artillery, and Prince Battenberg, of the Cavalry, have taken leave of the Emperor, after obtaining His Majesty's permission to proceed to the head-quarters of the Russian army on the Danube. These appointments are said to be due to the displeasure expressed by the German Government at the exception made in favour of the French Military Attaché, who has for some time been attached to the Grand Duke Nicholas' staff. In consequence of the representations of the German Government the Emperor Alexander appears to have addressed a special invitation to the above-named officers.

General Von Weder accompanies the Emperor personally as His Majesty's aide decamp.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 89.

Count Beust to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

Belgrave Square, le 3 Juin, 1877.

M. le Comte,

LE Gouvernement Russe fait valoir que le blocus des ports Russes déclaré par la Turquie n'est point effectif et qu'en conséquence il ne répond pas aux exigences de l'Article 4 de la Déclaration de Paris de l'an 1856.

Le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal n'a pas eu l'occasion jusqu'ici d'en faire l'expérience par rapport à la navigation Austro-Hongroise, mais il attache un grand prix à connaître le point de vue adopté par les autres Puissances en principe à l'égard de la situation créée par le blocus.

D'ordre du mon Gouvernement j'ai l'honneur de recourir à l'obligeance habituelle de votre Excellence en la priant de vouloir bien me communiquer si le Gouvernement Britannique est muni d'une preuve que ce blocus n'est réellement pas effectif, de quelle manière cette preuve peut être établie et quelles sont les conditions essentielles qui dénotent le caractère du blocus effectif, et enfin quelles sont les conséquences qui doivent être tirées de cet état de choses.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) BEUST.

No. 90.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 138.) *Constantinople, June 3, 1877, 10·15 P.M.*

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE sent following to Tehran:—

"Persian Minister has informed Porte that about 3,000 Turkish Kurds of the Herki tribe have crossed into Persia and pillaged Marghiavir, killing two officers and some of the garrison, and are extending their depredations to other places. Porte is warned from Tehran that it must not be surprised if Persia takes military measures for defending her frontiers. Minister of the Interior promised to telegraph immediately to authorities to institute inquiries into the matter."

No. 91.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

Foreign Office, June 4, 1877, 3·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

ADMIRALTY wish you to send from time to time intelligence of the Turkish or other men-of-war stationed or calling at the Island of Crete in the usual printed form.

No. 92.

The Earl of Derby to Colonel Nixon.

Foreign Office, June 4, 1877, 3·50 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of the 20th April, relative to the crew of the residency steamer, correspondence on the subject has been sent to the Indian Government, and you should communicate with them on the subject.

No. 93.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

St. Petersburgh, June 4, 1877, 2 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

OFFICIAL telegram from Grand Duke Michael, dated 3rd of June and published this morning, states that General Tomakin reports having been attacked at Kizil Arval by 6,000 Tekhes. Combat lasted four hours, when the Tekhes fled, having sustained great losses. One killed and eleven wounded on the part of Russians. After the fight the Khans and elders gave in their submission, and since 27th May all goes favourably.

No. 94.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 4.)

Rustchuk, June 4, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BULGARIANS fear massacres directly passage of Russians reported. My opinion is that general interest requires that all the Consuls of the Great Powers should not quit their posts, otherwise massacres possible. Austrian colleague of same opinion. Telegraphed Constantinople.

No. 95.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 160.) *Foreign Office, June 4, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 448 of the 14th ultimo, forwarding a copy of the law passed by the Turkish Parliament authorizing the Porte to proclaim a state of siege in Constantinople in case of necessity.

You have since the date of this despatch reported by telegraph that the state of siege was actually proclaimed on the 24th ultimo, and that in reply to your urgent representations of the great importance of avoiding the application of this measure to foreigners, the Grand Vizier had promised you that orders should be given not to molest them in any way. In view of this promise, it does not appear necessary that I should send you any special instructions with regard to the proclamation of the state of siege; but your Excellency will state to the Porte that Her Majesty's Government expect that the assurances given to you by the Grand Vizier will be strictly adhered to, and in the event of their being infringed, will reserve to themselves the right of maintaining the privileges of British subjects under the Capitulations.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 96.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 62.) *Tehran, May 4, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram of yesterday's date, regarding the complaint by Persia of the reoccupation of the Islet Shalkheh, contiguous to the Island of Kizr, by the Pasha of Busrah, I have the honour to report that I took an opportunity of a visit to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to speak to him yesterday on the subject.

I said that I regretted this untoward discussion should have occurred at a moment when it was so much in the interest of Persia that nothing indicating hostile feeling should arise between the two Mohammedan States, and more particularly that the Persian Government should have employed the menacing language which they did in the concluding paragraph of their Memorandum. I reverted to the advice which your Lordship had verbally given to the Shah's Representative in London, to the effect that it would be a suicidal policy for Persia to take any part against Turkey in the present conflict; and I reminded him that he had frequently expressed his entire concurrence in the policy recommended by Her Majesty's Government. I repeated that the Persian Government should carefully abstain from taking any step which would have the effect of hampering the Turkish Government in their present difficulties, as that would undoubtedly deprive Persia entirely hereafter of the sympathies of England, and I then referred to the report which was circulated and generally believed in Tehran that several regiments, including the three from Ispahan, which he had assured me the other day were about to proceed to Meshed, were shortly to be dispatched to Kermanshah; and I said that if, at the present time, the Persian Government decided upon sending troops to the immediate vicinity of the Turkish frontier, that movement could not fail to be considered as one hostile to Turkey, and would be looked upon by the British Government as a measure adopted by Persia in the interest of Russia.

The Minister replied that, notwithstanding the publicity of the reports I had alluded to, there was not, up to the present moment, any intention of dispatching troops to the Turkish frontier; that the Ispahan regiments were really intended, as he had stated before, for service in Khorassan, and that the other regiments I had referred to were to continue on duty in Irak and to form the garrison in Tehran.

The result of what I gathered from a somewhat lengthened conversation was that, up to the present time, no further communication had been made to him by the Russian Minister with regard to the attitude which Persia would assume; that the Persian Government had now arrived at a decision in the matter, and that he was in a position to discuss the subject when it was again brought forward by the Russian Minister; and that the Persian views were not favourable to the expectations which had been expressed by him.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 97.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 63. Confidential.) *Tehran, May 7, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Russian Minister called upon the Minister for Foreign Affairs the day before yesterday, and said he wished to have an audience of the Shah, as he was charged with a "mission particulière" from the Emperor to His Majesty. He added that, having made that request, it would be for the Shah to decide whether the Shah could receive him alone or with the presence of any of his Ministers, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs replied that he would submit his request to the Shah, but that, so far as he was concerned, he might say at once that he would not himself be present.

The Shah received the Russian Minister the same afternoon in the garden of the palace and alone; and M. Zenoview then stated that he was instructed by the Emperor to ask what attitude Persia intended to take in the present war, and to say that the Emperor would be greatly pleased if Persia would join Russia against Turkey. His Majesty replied that that communication had already been submitted to him by his Minister for Foreign Affairs on the part of the Russian Legation, and that if delay had occurred in giving a reply, it was because he himself was not yet prepared to reply to the question, but that an answer would shortly be given to the proposal by the Persian Government.

The Russian Minister before leaving the garden met the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who had been sent for by the Shah, and probably understood from this that it was His Majesty's intention to show his dissatisfaction at the Minister's having been excluded from the interview.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. TAYLOUR THOMSON.

No. 98.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 5.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 5, 1877, 3·20 P.M.*

STATE of siege is established in Bucharest, probably on account of Poles, in respect of the arrival of the Emperor of Russia.

Giurgevo is being heavily shelled by Turkish batteries, and is in flames.

No. 99.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 5, 1877.*

WAR OFFICE state that Wellesley should send in his claims for travelling expenses from time to time to the War Office, when the amounts due will be paid by his agents. If he requires an advance, it will be made to his agents in London by the War Office, on the amount required being notified.

No. 100.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 5, 1877, 2·15 P.M.*

RUSSIAN and Roumanian Governments have called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the reckless manner in which the Turks are said to be laying torpedoes in the Danube, without taking proper steps to mark their position, so that they may be removed when no longer required.

Urge the Porte to give immediate instructions to Turkish military and naval authorities to take proper precautions in laying torpedoes, so as to allow of their removal after the termination of hostilities.

No. 101.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 162.) *Foreign Office, June 5, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE to inform you that my attention has been called by the Russian and Roumanian Governments to the reckless manner in which it is alleged that the Turks are laying torpedoes in the Danube; and I have to request that you will move the Porte to instruct their military and naval authorities, with as little delay as possible, to take all proper precautions in the laying down of torpedoes, so as to allow of their immediate removal at the close of the war.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 102.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 46. Political.) *Scutari, May 24, 1877.*

My Lord,

FOR some time past it had been reported by the authorities here, and denied by others, that the two Capitans Gion of Mirdicia, one the son of Capitan Marco, who is in prison here, and the other a near relative of Prenk Bib Doda, and a very influential Chief of his tribe, had been made prisoners near Gusinie, whilst endeavouring to cross over into Montenegro.

The report has now resolved itself into the following facts:—

On or about the 14th instant, Capitan Gion (Marco's son), the Rev. Don Primo, and six-and-twenty other Mirdites, having received a promise of asylum and hospitality from Montenegro, had left the district of Sossi, where they had taken refuge, and were attempting to work their way, over the most inaccessible mountains, into Prince Nicholas' territory.

Either through the ignorance or treachery of their guides, they came across a large body of the inhabitants of Gusinie, who are Mahommedans, and some regular troops, and after a short resistance, during which lives were lost on both sides, the Mirdites were made prisoners.

Orders came from the Porte that they should be sent to Constantinople, and they were therefore marched to Pristina, whence they were to be forwarded by the railway to Salonica.

The Turkish authorities were not at first aware that they had secured the Rev. Don Primo, who has been from the commencement of the Mirdite movement the person who has conducted the negotiations with Montenegro, and who has evidently been actuated by no other feelings than those of patriotism and the desire to bring North Albania out of the barbarism and anarchy which envelop it.

It is to be hoped that the Turkish Government will feel itself strong enough, after the success of its expedition against Mirdicia, to treat the young priest with magnanimity.

The elder Capitan Gion is still at liberty, as well as Prenk Bib Doda, Capitan Cola, and all the other important Mirdite Chiefs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 103.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 48. Political.) *Scutari, May 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that I have been informed that a battery of six heavy Krupp guns has been received in Montenegro from Germany, viâ Venice and Cattaro. Another battery of the same number of guns, of a smaller calibre, has been obtained from Italy, and no difficulty was encountered from the part of the local authorities when these pieces were passed, together with all the necessary ammunition, through the Austrian territory.

The Prince of Montenegro is still at Danilograd, in the vicinity of Spuz, and is attended by M. Yonine, the Russian Consul-General, M. Speyer, who was lately Acting Russian Consul here, and who was the first to set in motion the Mirdite movement, and by Colonel Bogoluboff, of the Imperial Guard.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 104.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 50. Political.) *Scutari, May 27, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Mustahfiz, or men belonging to the last ban of reserves, embodied in Lower Albania and Roumelia, are daily arriving here and being forwarded to Podgoritza.

The authorities say that they expect 10,000 of these men, but I believe it is more likely that about a quarter of this number will put in an appearance as far as Scutari.

The men are not, as is pretended, all old soldiers. They are a gathering of peasants of every age ranging between eighteen and fifty. The only article of clothing as yet served out to them by the Government is a red sash. They are armed with Enfield rifles, but do not appear to have to go through any drilling.

They look, and are, a horde which is likely to prove utterly useless before a real enemy. Up to the present time they have conducted themselves quietly, and do not possess the usual swagger of the Bashi-Bazouks or Mussulman condottieri of these regions.

The Governor-General yesterday called upon the Mahommedans of Scutari to furnish by the middle of next week a body of 1,000 men to serve on the Montenegrin frontier, and when making this demand, his Excellency added that a time might come when nearly all the regular troops here would be required in other parts of the Empire to meet the more powerful Russian enemy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 105.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

Scutari, June 5, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

BATTLE near Spuz commenced this morning at dawn and lasted eight hours. Turks claim to have carried positions around Danilograd. Sent to Constantinople.

No. 106.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

Belgrade, June 6, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

SENT to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople last night:—

"Nothing known here in confirmation of the apprehensions mentioned in your telegram of the 2nd instant; and the character of Servian preparations is not such as to suppose immediate war, though it does not exclude hostile designs when a more favourable opportunity presents itself. Nothing known of the presence of Russian officers here."

No. 107.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 6.)

(No. 130.) *Constantinople, June 6, 1877, noon.*

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE received following from Erzeroum:—

"Russians have taken Olti. Their cavalry is now pushing reconnoitering parties

towards Gheorgiliogliaz. Five battalions and ammunition have been sent to-day in haste to latter place.

"Battalions coming from Toprak Kalé reached this in bad condition. McCalmont reports 30 per cent. of the troops along the road as unfit for immediate service, being footsore and ill. Russians liberate all reserve battalions taken at Ardahan, retaining 500 regulars prisoners. Cossacks have been reported seen in Isper district; they threaten communications with Baibart."

No. 108.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 164.)
Foreign Office, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

HER Majesty's Government approve of your having spoken to the Sultan on the subject of the outrages committed by the Circassians, as reported in your Excellency's despatch No. 471 of the 17th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 109.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 165.)
Foreign Office, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve of your having brought to the notice of the Seraskier the cases of mutilation of killed and wounded Mirdites reported by Mr. Consul Green, as mentioned in your despatch No. 468 of the 22nd ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 110.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 166.)
Foreign Office, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch No. 499 of the 23rd ultimo, I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the steps taken by your Excellency in order to give effect to the amnesty which the Sultan and his Government had promised to grant to the Bulgarian prisoners, and I have to request you to convey to Mr. Blunt my approval of the manner in which he carried out the instructions given to him by your Excellency in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 111.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 167.)
Foreign Office, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 484 of the 21st ultimo, forwarding a report by Mr. Blunt of a conversation held by him with the Grand Vizier respecting the state of the Vilayet of Adrianople, and I have to request you to convey to Mr. Blunt my approval of the advice given by him to his Highness in regard to the steps to be taken for restraining the Circassians from committing excesses.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 112.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 168.)
Foreign Office, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 470 of the 17th ultimo, relating to the differences between Turkey and Persia, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the steps taken by you to bring about a good understanding between the two countries.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 113.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 7.)

(Telegraphic.)
Galatz, June 6, 1877.

THE Czar passed by rail about 11 this morning.

No. 114.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 7.)

(Telegraphic.)
Scutari, June 6, 1877, 11·25 P.M.

PRINCE of Montenegro's Secretary has telegraphed to the French Consul, and asked him to acquaint me that battle yesterday near Spuz was a defeat of the Turks, who were driven till under the walls of that fortress, leaving a number of killed on the field. Secretary also states that a Turkish fort in the Duga Pass has been taken. Turks here still claim victory, and say they will probably renew their march to-morrow. On the side of Kolashin the Turks also claim a victory and the occupation of Moritan.

No. 115.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 7, 4 P.M.)

(No. 140.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 7, 1877, 11·40 A.M.

TURKISH Government have decided upon not permitting cypher telegrams to be sent by Consuls and Military Attachés in Europe. They say that they would willingly make an exception in our favour, but that if they do so they might be compelled to grant same privilege to others who are known to be hostile to Turkey.

They earnestly beg Her Majesty's Government not to insist that the Military Attachés should be allowed to telegraph in cypher.

I have suggested that general substance of a cyphered telegram might be previously communicated to the Commander-in-chief or to the military authorities. I doubt whether even this will be agreed to on account of others who are not to be trusted asking for the same. Telegrams in English are to be admitted.

No. 116.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 143.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 7, 1877, 12·10 P.M.

THE Porte has informed me that all ships arriving at the Dardanelles at nightfall must stop before Sedul Bahr and Koum Kalé till daybreak. The authorities will fire blank cartridge upon any ship acting in defiance of this regulation.

No. 117.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 7, 4·10 P.M.*)

(No. 143.) *Constantinople, June 7, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)
FOLLOWING from Colonel Nixon, Bagdad, dated yesterday :—

"The Persian troops have retired from Mohammerah to await orders at Ahwaz. Hushmit o Dowlat follows with the rest in a few days. No aggressive movement is anticipated there now as the question of the island is settled. If any aggression occurs will report at once. Gun-boat 'Rifleman' has arrived at Busreh. The 'Daphne' leaves on Saturday."

No. 118.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 7.*)

Bucharest, June 7, 1877, 11·40 A.M.
(Telegraphic.)
MARTIAL law is proclaimed throughout Roumania, with the exception of five districts in the mountains.

No. 119.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 7.*)

Athens, June 7, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)
POPULAR demonstrations having impressed upon the different party leaders and upon the Chamber the necessity of union, a coalition Government has been formed consequently, under the presidency of Admiral Canaris, composed of all the party leaders except M. Bulgaris, whom they did not invite to join them.

No. 120.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 7.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Berlin, June 7, 1877.*
(Confidential.)
COUNT SCHOUVALOFF passed through Berlin yesterday under orders, proceeding direct to London, where he arrives this evening. His Excellency was unable to see M. de Bülow, and is said to have declined Emperor's invitation to Lignitz.

No. 121.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

Foreign Office, June 7, 1877, 5 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)
IS Captain Heneage available to go to Bucharest? We may want to send to Wellesley.

No. 122.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

Foreign Office, June 7, 1877, 6 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)
I PROPOSE to send Captain Heneage to Bucharest if Colonel Wellesley or you have any important despatches to send. Let me know if you require a messenger.

No. 123.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

Foreign Office, June 7, 1877, 6·20 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)
CAN you ascertain privately where 4th, 13th, and 14th Russian corps are?

No. 124.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sanderson.

Foreign Office, June 7, 1877, 6·30 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)
WHAT Russian corps are now at Galatz?

No. 125.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, June 7, 1877, 7·20 P.M.
(Telegraphic.)
SHIPPERS of coal to Port Saïd for use of merchant-steamers passing through Canal desire to be protected from risk of cargo being captured as contraband. Will Russian Government give such assurances or agree to such arrangement as will relieve British shippers and shipowners of any doubt or anxiety on the subject? Stoppage of coal supply at Port Saïd would cause serious impediment to Canal traffic.

No. 126.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 50. Political.) *Galatz, June 1, 1877.*
My Lord,
I HAVE the honour to report that early on the morning of the 26th May a Turkish turret ship was blown up by a torpedo in the Matchin branch of the river near Ibraila. It appears that five steam-launches proceeded on this service under cover of the darkness, and taking advantage of the shelter afforded by the reeds; the accounts of how the vessel was destroyed are very conflicting, but it seems probable that Whitehead's torpedos were used; the first torpedo appears only to have done some slight damage, but the second took full effect.

On the 24th May about 100 Russians crossed in boats from Galatz, but after proceeding up the river and making for the hills opposite, they were met, before they landed, by a fire from a party of Turks and retired with some slight loss; had the Turks waited till the Russians left the boats the loss would, in all probability, have been comparatively severe. The following day a small party of Turks were observed to have taken up a position on one of the hills, probably only a post of observation, however.

Yesterday, I am informed, a party of Turks in about thirty boats tried to land near Ismail, but they were repulsed by the Cossacks, the Russian loss being stated at two men killed and two wounded, that of the Turks unknown.

The greater part, if not the whole, of the Circassians have been sent back into Russia; it is stated that two small parties sent across the river in boats deserted, and that the men requested to be employed against a foe of other nationality than their own.

The 14th Army Corps is coming in, and it is stated that a force of 40,000 men will be stationed in the vicinity of Galatz.

The river continues very high, and the railway has been interrupted at several points for some days, but the water in the Sereth is now falling, and the officials say that through traffic will be resumed in four days.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 127.

Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne, R.E., to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 8.*)

(No. 14.) *Galatz, June 1, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of the correspondence which has taken place between the Ottoman authorities and the Danube Commission on the subject of the hoisting of the flag of the Commission on its buildings, vessels, &c., during the existing war.

We have as yet received no reply to our letter of the 14th instant, but we have received telegraphic information from Sulina which shows that the Porte persists in its refusal of our request.

Article 21 of the Public Act relating to the navigation of the mouths of the Danube (agreed to by the Porte), and Article VII of the Treaty of London of 13th March, 1871, enjoin that the neutrality of the "works and establishments of all kinds created by the European Commission of the Danube" shall be, in case of war, equally respected by all the belligerents.

It is not easy to conceive how one belligerent can be expected to respect the neutrality of establishments on which he finds flying the flag of the other.

It will be observed that the more immediate point at issue is the security of our floating "establishments," and it is manifest that to allow our steamboats to carry the flag of one belligerent is to expose them to the attacks of the other.

We have consequently no alternative but to suspend the functions of the different vessels, and this has already been done.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. SIBORNE,
British Commissioner on the Danube.

Inclosure 1 in No. 127.

M. Haan to Mehemed Saïd Pasha.

Galatz, le 19 Avril, 1877.

Excellence,

LA Commission Européenne jouit en vertu des Traités de Paris et de Londres d'une neutralité absolue en cas de guerre pour les ouvrages et établissements qui ont été créés par elle ainsi que pour son personnel.

Afin de faire respecter cette neutralité dans les circonstances actuelles, la Commission a examiné diverses propositions qui tendent à mettre en évidence ce caractère international.

Dans ce but il importerait avant tout de prescrire aux bateaux de service de la Commission de porter provisoirement exclusivement le pavillon-signal de la Commission.

Comme cette question intéresse votre Excellence par le motif que ces bateaux ont porté jusqu'ici le pavillon Ottoman et que la Commission ne voudrait pas procéder dans une telle question sans avoir entendu l'avis de votre Excellence, elle vous prie de vouloir informer la Commission dans le plus court délai, si vous avez une objection contre cette mesure, qui paraît à la Commission indispensable pour assurer la neutralité de ses bateaux et par conséquent la possibilité de continuer le service de police du fleuve et du port ainsi que de pilotage dans le cas de guerre.

La Commission par cette mesure n'entend pas préjuger à la question de principe sur le pavillon.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) HAAN.

Inclosure 2 in No. 127.

Mehemed Saïd Pasha to M. Haan.

Toultcha, le 24 Avril, 1877.

AYANT référé à la Sublime Porte contenu de la note 19 Avril, j'attends sa réponse pour vous la communiquer.

(Signé) MEHEMED SAID.

Inclosure 3 in No. 127.

Mehemed Saïd Pasha to the European Commission of the Danube.

Toultcha, le 28 Avril, 1877.

MM. et chers Collègues,

FAISANT suite à mon télégramme du 24 April courant, je m'empresse de vous informer que je viens de recevoir de la Sublime Porte la réponse à la dépêche que je lui avais adressée relativement à la question du pavillon à arborer sur les bateaux de service de la Commission.

Il résulte de cette réponse que le Gouvernement Impérial n'a pas lieu d'objecter à ce que, en cas de guerre, la neutralité stipulée par les Traités soit mise plus en évidence au moyen de signes caractéristiques.

Je suis autorisé, en conséquence, à consentir à ce que la Commission puisse, en cas de guerre, arborer son pavillon-signal conjointement avec le pavillon Ottoman sur les ouvrages et établissements créés par elle et protégés par la neutralité résultant de l'Article VII de la Convention de Londres de 1871.

Je saisis, &c.
(Signé) MEHEMED SAID.

Inclosure 4 in No. 127.

The European Commission to Mehemed Saïd Pasha.

Toultcha, le 3 Mai, 1877.

M. le Gouverneur et cher Collègue,

PAR lettre du 28 du mois dernier, vous avez fait savoir à la Commission Européenne que la Sublime Porte consent à ce que le pavillon-signal soit arboré sur nos embarcations à côté du drapeau Turc.

Permettez-nous de vous faire observer que tel n'était pas l'objet de la demande que nous vous avions précédemment adressé. A raison des hostilités dont le Danube semble devoir être le théâtre, il nous a paru dangereux pour les navires de la Commission Européenne, et en même temps contraire à la neutralité qui nous est garantie par les Traités, de laisser nos embarcations porter le drapeau de l'un des deux belligérants, c'est pourquoi nous vous avons proposé de ne plus arborer sur ces bâtiments d'autre pavillon que le nôtre, pendant la durée de la guerre.

La décision de la Sublime Porte dont vous nous avez donné communication n'atteint pas notre but. Nous vous prions donc de vouloir bien insister dans le sens de nos observations auprès du Gouvernement Impérial en lui faisant remarquer qu'il ne s'agit pas d'une question de principe mais d'une mesure purement temporaire.

Ainsi que la Commission Européenne en a prévenue votre Excellence dès le 25 Avril, elle n'a pas jugé possible de différer plus longtemps l'application de la mesure conservatoire qui lui était imposée par les circonstances; depuis le 27, nos bateaux font exclusivement usage du pavillon signal. Vous reconnaîtrez avec nous la nécessité de maintenir cet état de choses jusqu'à ce que la Sublime Porte ait pris une décision définitive. Nous ne saurions, d'ailleurs, vous dissimuler que si les autorités Ottomanes nous contestaient la faculté de prendre les mesures qu'exige la sauvegarde des propriétés de la Commission Européenne, nous aviserions à suspendre le service de nos embarcations, laissant aux Etats intéressés le soin d'attribuer à qui de droit la responsabilité d'un résultat aussi regrettable.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) SIBORNE.
HERBETTE.

Inclosure 5 in No. 127.

Mehemed Saïd Pasha to the European Commission of the Danube.

Soulina de Toultcha.

ME référant à votre lettre du 3 Mai courant, j'ai l'honneur vous informer que j'ai reçu de la Sublime Porte réponse suivante:—

Gouvernement Impérial ne peut pas autoriser substitution pure et simple du pavillon Ottoman il ne peut apporter aucune modification au fonctionnement normal de la Commission si par suite de l'état de guerre et ses opérations militaires dans cette

partie du Danube Commission se trouve dans impossibilité continuer ses services dans conditions règlementaires; ce sera un cas de force majeure qu'il est impossible prévenir.

(Signé) MEHEMED SAID.

Inclosure 6 in No. 127.

The European Commission to Mehemed Saïd Pasha.

Soulina, le 14 Mai, 1877.

M. le Gouverneur et cher Collègue,

NOUS avons l'honneur d'accuser réception de la dépêche par laquelle vous avez bien voulu nous communiquer un nouveau télégramme de la Sublime Porte relativement à la question du pavillon.

Nous voyons avec regret que le Gouvernement Impérial semble nous attribuer encore des motifs hostiles à sa souveraineté territoriale, ce qui est tout à fait contraire à nos intentions, et qu'il ne partage pas notre appréciation sur la nécessité où nous nous trouvons, de maintenir une neutralité absolue entre les deux belligérants.

Il nous paraît, d'ailleurs, que le "cas de force majeure," auquel la Sublime Porte se réfère, s'est déjà produit en tant que l'état de guerre expose tout bâtiment portant le pavillon d'un des belligérants aux attaques de l'autre.

La Porte ne se refusera pas, sans doute, à envisager la situation dans l'esprit conciliant dont nous sommes animés, et elle ne nous placera pas dans l'obligation de nuire à l'intérêt général, en nous forçant de suspendre le service de nos embarcations à cause des dangers qui pourraient les menacer.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) SIBORNE.
HERBETTE.

No. 128.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 8.*)

Constantinople, le 5 Juin, 1877.

(Télégraphique.)

PAR une communication antérieure, la Sublime Porte s'était empressé de dénoncer aux Puissances Signataires du Traité de Paris la Convention par laquelle le Gouvernement de Bucharest avait facilité l'invasion des Principautés-Unies et de l'Empire aux armées Russes. Depuis, les forces militaires Moldo-Valaques n'avaient cessé de se livrer à des actes d'hostilité contre le territoire et les armées de l'Empire. Enfin, la Sublime Porte vient d'être informée que le Gouvernement Princier a proclamé son indépendance et déclaré la guerre à la Puissance Suzeraine. La rébellion des Principautés-Unies est donc désormais un fait consommé. Les mêmes hommes qui, avec une insigne déloyauté, ont livré le pays à l'ennemi et ont fait de l'armée Princière un instrument servile entre les mains de la Russie, poussent la témérité jusqu'à essayer de briser les liens originels des Principautés avec le reste de l'Empire, et de violer ouvertement les arrangements par lesquels toute l'Europe avait déterminé les conditions de l'existence politique de la Moldo-Valachie.

L'Europe sait avec quelle fidélité la Sublime Porte a de tout temps respecté les priviléges accordés aux Principautés, même pendant leurs périodes les plus agitées. Malgré la prétention du Gouvernement Moldo-Valaque de faire valoir comme vérités les idées erronées qu'il se formait depuis quelque temps des droits et des devoirs découlant de ses relations avec la Cour Suzeraine, aucun obstacle n'a été opposé à l'exercice des libertés légitimes qui sont les moteurs de tout progrès sincère et réel. Aucune entrave n'a été apportée au développement des institutions du pays. Malheureusement, tout cela a été impuissant à maintenir le Gouvernement Princier dans la voie que lui traçaient l'honneur et les vrais intérêts du pays.

L'indépendance proclamée dans un moment où les Principautés se trouvent envahies par l'ennemi ne trompera ni l'Europe ni les Moldo-Valaques eux-mêmes. L'histoire démontre suffisamment quel parti la Russie sait retirer tôt ou tard de pareilles proclamations d'indépendance au profit de ses intérêts et de son ambition. Mais cette fois-ci, en poussant les Principautés à la rébellion, le Gouvernement Russe ne se borne pas à préparer la ruine des provinces auxquelles les Traités avaient assuré

pendant une longue série d'années une prospérité enviable; il se rend, vis-à-vis de la Sublime Porte, complice de la révolution et l'inspirateur des principes les plus subversifs. Il jette à l'Europe tout entière le défi, en travaillant à abattre et à détruire tout l'édifice politique qui, consacré par le temps, a été jugé, il y a quelques années seulement, essentiel au maintien de l'équilibre général.

Devant une situation si déplorable, la Sublime Porte proteste de la manière la plus formelle et la plus énergique tant contre la résolution du Gouvernement Princier que contre les entreprises ambitieuses de la Russie. Nous repoussons des actes et des projets qui sont à la fois une atteinte manifeste aux Traités, aux conditions de l'existence politique des Principautés, et aux engagements les plus solennels du Prince Charles vis-à-vis de son Suzerain.

La Sublime Porte déclare que, quoi que le Gouvernement rebelle de la Moldo-Valachie puisse faire et dire, elle entend maintenir ses droits intacts, en se réservant d'user envers les Principautés des moyens que lui conseillerait le soin de ses propres intérêts et que la marche des événements lui suggérerait.

Le Gouvernement Impérial prie les Puissances Signataires du Traité de Paris de vouloir bien prendre acte de cette démarche. Il espère voir l'Europe s'associer à sa pensée et à sa protestation. Il est convaincu que toutes les Puissances intéressées au maintien du droit public Européen élèveront la voix pour condamner des actes aussi irréfléchis que coupables, pour les empêcher de produire aucun effet politique et pour prévenir les conséquences désastreuses qui en découleraient, ainsi que les graves perturbations qui pourraient en résulter pour l'équilibre Européen.

Veuillez communiquer cette dépêche à son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères du Gouvernement près duquel vous êtes accrédité et lui en laisser copie.

No. 129.

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(*Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, June 8.*)

St. Pétersbourg, le $\frac{18}{30}$ *Mai*, 1877.

M. le Comte,

VOTRE Excellence a été chargée par Lord Derby d'une lettre qui expose les vues du Cabinet Anglais quant aux questions qui pourraient être impliquées dans la guerre actuelle et toucheraient à des intérêts que l'Angleterre doit défendre.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur en a pris connaissance avec un vif intérêt et apprécie la franchise d'explications dont le but est d'écarter des malentendus entre les deux Gouvernements.

Notre auguste Maître m'ordonne d'y répondre par une entière réciprocité, en vous mettant en mesure d'exposer avec la même franchise et la même clarté nos vues, tant sur les points mentionnés par Lord Derby que sur ceux qui touchent à des intérêts que, de son côté, Sa Majesté Impériale a le devoir de sauvegarder.

Le Cabinet Impérial ne veut ni bloquer, ni interrompre, ni menacer en rien, la navigation du Canal de Suez. Il le considère comme une œuvre internationale, intéressant le commerce du monde, et qui doit rester hors de toute atteinte.

L'Egypte fait partie de l'Empire Ottoman, et ses contingents figurent dans l'armée Turque. La Russie pourrait donc se considérer comme en guerre avec elle. Toutefois, le Cabinet Impérial ne méconnaît ni les intérêts Européens engagés dans ce pays, ni ceux de l'Angleterre en particulier. Il ne fera pas entrer l'Egypte dans le rayon de ses opérations militaires.

Pour ce qui concerne Constantinople, sans pouvoir préjuger la marche ni l'issue de la guerre, le Cabinet Impérial répète qu'une acquisition de cette capitale est exclue des vues de Sa Majesté l'Empereur. Il reconnaît qu'en tous cas le sort de Constantinople est une question d'intérêt commun, qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale, et que si la possession de cette ville devait être mise en question elle ne saurait appartenir à aucune des Puissances de l'Europe.

Quant aux Détroits, quoique les deux rives appartiennent au même Souverain, ils forment le débouché exclusif de deux vastes mers où tout le monde a des intérêts. Il importe donc à la paix et à l'équilibre général que cette question soit réglée d'un commun accord sur des bases équitables et efficacement garanties.

Lord Derby a fait allusion à d'autres intérêts Britanniques pouvant être affectés par l'extension éventuelle de la guerre, comme le Golfe Persique et la route des Indes. Le Cabinet Impérial déclare qu'il n'étendra pas la guerre au delà de ce qu'exige le but hautement et clairement proclamé pour lequel Sa Majesté l'Empereur a été obligé de

prendre les armes. Il aura égard aux intérêts Britanniques mentionnés par Lord Derby, tant que l'Angleterre restera dans la neutralité.

Il a le droit d'attendre que, de son côté, le Gouvernement Anglais prendra également en juste considération les intérêts particuliers qui pour la Russie sont engagés dans cette guerre et en vue desquels elle s'est imposée de si grands sacrifices.

Ces intérêts résident dans la nécessité absolue de mettre un terme à la déplorable situation des Chrétiens sous la domination des Turcs et aux crises permanentes qu'elle provoque.

Cet état de choses et les violences qui l'accompagnent excitent en Russie une agitation motivée par le sentiment Chrétien, très profond dans le peuple Russe, et par les liens de foi et de race qui l'unissent à une grande partie des populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie. Le Gouvernement Impérial est d'autant plus obligé d'en tenir compte, qu'elle réagit à la fois sur la situation intérieure et extérieure de l'Empire. A chacune de ces crises sa politique est suspectée et incriminée, ses relations internationales, son commerce, ses finances, son crédit en sont affectés.

Sa Majesté l'Empereur ne peut pas laisser la Russie exposée indéfiniment à ces chances désastreuses qui entravent son développement pacifique et lui causent un préjudice incalculable.

C'est pour en tarir la source que Sa Majesté Impériale s'est décidée à imposer à son pays les charges de la guerre.

Ce but ne peut être atteint que si les populations Chrétiennes de la Turquie sont placées dans une situation où leur existence et leur sécurité seraient efficacement garanties contre les intolérables abus de l'administration Turque. Cet intérêt vital pour la Russie n'est en contradiction avec aucun des intérêts de l'Europe, qui souffre, de son côté, de l'état précaire de l'Orient.

Le Cabinet Impérial s'est efforcé de le réaliser avec le concours des Puissances amies et alliées.

Obligé de le poursuivre seul, notre auguste Maître est résolu à ne pas poser les armes avant de l'avoir complétement, sûrement, efficacement garantie.

Veuillez exposer ces considérations à Lord Derby, en lui disant que le Cabinet Impérial est en droit d'espérer que le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique les appréciera avec le même sentiment d'équité qui nous porte à respecter les intérêts de l'Angleterre, et qu'il y puisera la même conviction que nous, c'est-à-dire, qu'il n'y a rien dans les vues échangées entre les deux Gouvernements avec une franchise réciproque qui ne puisse se concilier pour le maintien de leurs bons rapports et la paix de l'Orient et de l'Europe.

Recevez, &c.
(Signé) GORTCHAKOW.

No. 130.

Memorandum of a Confidential Conversation of Count Schouvaloff with Lord Derby, June 8, 1877.

SA Majesté l'Empereur attache le plus grand prix au maintien des bons rapports entre les deux pays. Il y fera tous ses efforts, mais il faut que le Cabinet Anglais s'y prête de sa part.

Il n'y a rien à ajouter à la lettre du Chancelier Prince Gortchacow en ce qui concerne le Canal de Suez et l'Egypte. La Russie ne touchera pas à ces deux points.

Pour ce qui est de Constantinople, nos assurances ne peuvent porter que sur une prise de possession ou une occupation permanente. Cela serait un fait singulier et sans précédent, si au début d'une guerre l'un des belligérants s'engageait d'avance à ne pas poursuivre ses opérations militaires jusque sous les murs de la capitale. Il n'est pas impossible que l'obstination des Turcs, surtout s'ils se savent garantis contre une pareille éventualité, ne prolonge la guerre au lieu de l'abréger.

Une fois les Ministres Anglais pleinement assurés que nous ne resterons en aucun cas à Constantinople, il dépend de l'Angleterre et des autres Puissances de nous dispenser même d'en approcher. Il leur suffira d'agir sur les Turcs afin de rendre la paix possible avant d'en venir à cette extrémité. C'est à quoi, pour notre part, nous nous prêterons volontiers.

Pour ce qui concerne les Détroits, les arrangements en vertu desquels la Mer Noire, fermée en temps de paix, est ouverte en temps de guerre à toutes les flottes

ennemies de la Russie, ont été conçus dans un sentiment de défiance et d'hostilité à son égard. C'est une question qui ne peut être révisée que d'un commun accord, de manière à garantir la Mer Noire contre les conséquences de la position anormale et exceptionnelle des Détroits. Serait-il possible pour la Russie de s'engager, au début d'une guerre qui peut être heureuse pour elle, à ne pas faire valoir devant l'Europe la nécessité d'une révision d'un ordre de choses qui a été établi contre elle?

L'Angleterre semble craindre que l'extension ou les conséquences de la guerre ne nous amènent à menacer Bassorah et le Golfe Persique. Nous n'avons aucun intérêt à troubler l'Angleterre dans ses possessions des Indes et par conséquent dans ses communications. La guerre actuelle ne l'exige pas, car le but en est clairement défini et il serait plutôt compliqué que facilité par une extension aussi vaste de la lutte.

Le Comte Schouvaloff est autorisé à donner à ce sujet les assurances les plus catégoriques, mais en ce cas la Russie est en droit de s'attendre à son tour que l'Angleterre n'entreprendra aucune action hostile contre elle.

Il faut en venir au but essentiel de la guerre, c'est là le plus important. Si une entente pouvait se faire sur ce point, si l'objectif à atteindre était bien défini et le champ des opérations nettement délimité, toutes les questions accessoires tomberaient d'elles-mêmes et le résultat serait d'autant plus facilement réalisé qu'il rencontrerait le concours de la bonne volonté de toutes les Puissances, au lieu des obstacles qui l'éloignent et le compliquent.

C'est sur quoi le Comte Schouvaloff attire toute l'attention de Lord Derby, en précisant aussi clairement et pratiquement que possible les vues du Cabinet Impérial à ce sujet.

Ce qu'il faut absolument à la Russie, c'est de mettre fin aux crises permanentes de l'Orient, d'un côté en affirmant la supériorité de ses armes, de manière à ce qu'à l'avenir les Turcs ne soient pas tentés de la défier à la légère; de l'autre côté, en mettant les Chrétiens, et surtout ceux de la Bulgarie, dans une situation efficacement garantie contre les abus de l'administration Turque.

Ce qu'il faut à l'Angleterre, c'est le maintien en principe de l'Empire Ottoman et l'inviolabilité de Constantinople et des Détroits.

Ces vues ne sont pas inconciliables.

Une fois la guerre engagée, nous ne pouvons accepter de restriction à nos opérations éventuelles. Elles restent subordonnées exclusivement aux nécessités militaires, mais les conséquences de cette guerre peuvent être renfermées d'avance dans certaines limites convenues.

Nous pourrions donner dès-à-présent l'assurance que si la neutralité des Puissances est maintenu et si la Porte nous demande la paix avant que nos armées n'aient franchi les Balkans, l'Empereur consentirait à ne pas dépasser cette ligne.

La paix en ce cas devrait être conclue aux conditions suivantes:

La Bulgarie jusqu'aux Balkans serait érigée en province vassale autonome sous la garantie de l'Europe.

Les troupes et les fonctionnaires Turcs en seraient éloignés, les forteresses désarmées et rasées.

Le "self-government" y serait établi avec l'appui d'une milice nationale à organiser le plus tôt possible.

Les Puissances s'accorderaient pour assurer à la partie de la Bulgarie au sud des Balkans, ainsi qu'aux autres provinces Chrétiennes de la Turquie, les meilleures garanties possibles d'une administration régulière.

Le Monténégro et la Serbie recevraient une augmentation de territoire qui sera déterminée en commun.

La Bosnie et l'Herzégovine seraient dotées des institutions jugées d'un commun accord compatible avec leur état intérieur et propres à y assurer une bonne administration indigène.

La situation limitrophe de ces deux provinces avec l'Autriche-Hongrie donne à cette dernière une voix prépondérante dans leur organisation future.

La Serbie, comme la Bulgarie, resteraient placées sous la suzeraineté du Sultan; les rapports du suzerain et des vassaux seront définis de manière à prévenir les conflits.

Pour ce qui est de la Roumanie, qui vient de proclamer son indépendance, l'Empereur est d'avis que c'est une question qui ne peut être réglée que par une entente générale.

Si ces conditions sont acceptées, les Cabinets pourraient exercer une pression collective sur la Porte, en l'avertissant qu'en cas de refus elle serait abandonnée aux conséquences de la guerre.

Si la Porte demandait la paix et acceptait les conditions énumérées plus haut avant que nos armées n'aient franchi la ligne des Balkans, la Russie accepterait la paix, mais se réserve le droit de stipuler quelques avantages particuliers comme compensation des charges de la guerre.

Ces avantages ne dépasseraient pas la restitution de la partie de la Bessarabie cédée en 1856 jusqu'au bras septentrional du Danube (c'est-à-dire le delta des bouches de ce fleuve reste exclu), et la cession de Batoum avec un territoire adjacent.

En pareil cas, la Roumanie pourrait d'un commun accord être dédommagée, soit par la proclamation de son indépendance, soit si elle restait vassale par une partie de la Dobroudja.

Si l'Autriche-Hongrie réclamait de son côté une compensation, soit pour les acquisitions faites par la Russie, soit comme gage de sécurité contre les remaniements ci-dessus mentionnés au profit des Principautés Chrétiennes de la presqu'île des Balkans, la Russie ne s'opposerait pas à ce qu'elle cherche ces compensations en Bosnie et en partie en Herzégovine.

Telles sont les bases auxquelles Sa Majesté l'Empereur donnerait son assentiment, en vue d'établir l'entente avec l'Angleterre et l'Europe et d'arriver à une prompte paix.

Le Comte Schouvaloff est autorisé à pressentir l'opinion de Lord Derby quant à ces conditions de paix, sans lui cacher le prix que le Cabinet Impérial attache à une bonne entente avec le Cabinet de Londres.

Pour résumer, si la Porte demandait la paix, et acceptait les conditions ci-dessus, avant que les armées Russes n'aient franchi les Balkans, l'Empereur consentirait à ne pas pousser plus loin les opérations de guerre.

Si le Gouvernement Turc s'y refusait, la Russie devrait poursuivre la guerre jusqu'à ce que la Porte soit forcée de souscrire à la paix. En ce cas, les conditions du Cabinet Impérial pourraient être autres.

En exposant ainsi, avec une entière franchise, le but que se propose l'Empereur et qu'il ne dépassera pas autant que la guerre se maintiendra de ce côté-ci des Balkans, Sa Majesté offre le moyen de localiser la guerre et d'empêcher la dissolution de l'Empire Ottoman; mais il importe à l'Empereur de savoir si dans les limites indiquées il peut être assuré de la neutralité de l'Angleterre, neutralité qui exclurait une occupation même temporaire de Constantinople et des Détroits par cette Puissance.

Lord Derby a dit que le Comte Schouvaloff ne pouvait s'attendre à recevoir de lui une réponse à des propositions aussi sérieuses et qu'il en conférerait avec ses collègues.

No. 131.

M. Arapeff to M. de Bülow.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Münster, June 8.)

M. le Ministre d'Etat, *Berlin, le $\frac{10}{22}$ Mai*, 1877.

PAR un télégramme en date du $\frac{13}{25}$ Avril, l'Administration de nos Télégraphes a été informée que le Gouvernement Ottoman avait suspendu la transmission des dépêches télégraphiques entre la Turquie et la Russie par le cable sous-marin d'Odessa pendant la durée de la guerre actuelle. Nos autorités ont été averties en même temps que le service du cable susmentionné était arrêté non-seulement pour les dépêches Russes, mais aussi pour celles des autres pays.

Sans contester à la Turquie le droit de prendre telle mesure qu'elle croirait opportune en temps de guerre, notre Département des Télégraphes a attiré l'attention du Gouvernement Impérial sur les inconvénients qu'entraînerait, pour les autres nations, la fermeture totale de la ligne d'Odessa-Constantinople, et les perturbations qui pourraient en résulter pour les intérêts privés en général. Il n'existe aucun motif, selon lui, d'étendre aux télégrammes de provenance étrangère l'interdiction dont la correspondance télégraphique par le cable sous-marin se trouve frappée, entre la Russie et la Turquie, en vertu de l'état de guerre.

Cette question semblerait devoir intéresser les autres nations, surtout à la suite d'un récent projet d'arrangement, pour la transmission des télégrammes aux Indes par la voie plus rapide d'Odessa.

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance de votre Excellence, j'ai l'honneur de la prier, d'ordre du Ministère Impérial, de vouloir bien m'informer si le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal ne consentirait pas à entrer dans l'examen de cette question,

en vue d'en faire l'objet, dans les voies amicales, d'une communication ou d'une démarche auprès de qui de droit.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) ARAPOFF.

No. 132.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, June 7, 1877, 7·20 P.M.*

PRINCE GORTCHAKOW has said to the French Ambassador at St. Petersburgh that the Emperor of Russia does not wish to cross the Balkans; that after any marked success on Turkish side of the Danube, His Imperial Majesty would receive with satisfaction an overture from the Powers for settling terms of peace; that the initiative in proposing such an overture might appropriately be taken by France. Due Decazes is of opinion that it would be better that the initiative should be taken by Germany, and thinks that this might be suggested to Germany by Her Majesty's Government. Failing this, he thinks Her Majesty's Government might make a proposal to all the Powers in common. He believes, however, that Austria is unwilling that peace should be made immediately, and he says that since this morning he has become absolutely certain that at the beginning of the war a diplomatic document was signed by Count Andrassy and the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, stipulating that neither Russia nor Austria should occupy Servia, but that if the war went on, Austria should take possession, first of Turkish Croatia and afterwards of all Bosnia. Instructions go to-night to French Ambassador to speak to your Lordship about these matters.

No. 133.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, June 7, 1877, 7·45 P.M.*

DUC DECAZES puts forward, most confidentially, the idea that if Dardanelles are opened, France and England should unite to establish a joint protectorate by them of Egypt and Syria, with Crete and Cyprus as advanced posts.

I have given no encouragement to the idea.

No. 134.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 7, 1877.*

PERSIAN GOVERNMENT have announced their intention of forming a military camp near Oroomiah, in consequence of a recent serious aggression by Turkish tribe Herkee.

I am dissuading them from sending larger force than requisite to maintain order on that part of the frontier.

They have now received intelligence that a considerable Turkish force with twenty guns has been dispatched to Persian frontier at Khanekun, and they announce their intention to reform camp lately withdrawn from Zohab.

No. 135.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of May 28th, Persian Government accept terms proposed by Porte for withdrawal from Ishad in the Euphrates, and agree not to build or fortify or place Persian soldiers upon it pending ultimate decision.

It arranged that proposed camp near Oroomah shall not be formed for the present pending references to Constantinople and London.

Communicated to Constantinople and India.

No. 136.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 142.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 7, 1877, 12·5 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following from Tehran:—

"Persian Government has announced to Turkish Legation and myself that military camp will be formed on Merghever frontier in view of recent attack of Herkee tribe, referred to in your Excellency's telegrams of May 3. I am endeavouring to dissuade them from sending larger force than is requisite to restore and maintain order on that part of the frontier. Shah's absence has delayed treatment of this and Euphrates Island question, but he returns to-day. They have just received intelligence that Porte has sent twenty guns with regular troops, infantry and cavalry in proportion, to the Persian frontier at Jewanikeon, and that a Turkish officer is purchasing and collecting materials there for constructing guard-houses within the Persian territory. The Persian Government, in consequence of this information, have announced to me that they will also send a force to that part of the frontier to reform camp withdrawn from Zohab at my urgent suggestion, and that any attempt to build guard-houses will be forcibly prevented."

No. 137.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 145.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 7, 1877, 9·45 P.M.*

THE information received by the Porte and by the principal Greeks here is that as soon as Russians cross Danube, and obtain any success, Greece will enter upon hostilities against Turkey, and Greek troops will cross Turkish frontiers into Epirus and Thessaly, where an insurrection of the Christians is anticipated. Simultaneous rising is to take place in Crete. The language held to me to-day by the Greek Minister fully confirms this. Many Greek merchants here have, I understand, sent money to Greece for this object, and fresh calls are being made upon them by the Greek committees. (Sent to Athens.)

No. 138.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 146.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 10 A.M.*

GRAND VIZIER has asked me whether Her Majesty's Government would object to the Porte naming a Turkish Consul at Peshawur. I avoided giving an answer to the question, but I understand that it may be repeated to me or to Her Majesty's Government in a more formal manner. The object, it is stated, of the appointment would be "to promote, through the Sultan's influence, a good understanding between England and Affghanistan, and to counteract influence of Russia."

Sent to Viceroy of India.

No. 139.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 8, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*

FOURTH and fourteenth corps d'armée are on the march from the Russian frontier. Thirteenth is passing westward from Galatz.

No. 140.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 8, 1877.*

A PERMANENT messenger would be doubtless a great convenience both to myself and to Colonel Wellesley. The latter is not yet arrived.

No. 141.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, June 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 7th, part of the 14th Russian corps d'armée is now here. The 18th corps d'armée was to leave Ibraila yesterday for Giurgevo.

No. 142.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June 8, 1877.*

RESULTS of battle of 5th appear (to be) that the Turks failed to gain footing on the hills on the left bank of the Zeta, but that they have maintained advanced positions in front of Spuz.

Montenegrins bombarding Spuz with field guns.

Turks say some wounded have been mutilated.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

No. 143.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 8.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, June 8, 1877.*

THE official information received here from Montenegro represents the military operations as being so far favourable to Turks.

No. 144.

*The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.**

(No. 338.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I TRANSMIT herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,† with a copy of the Law passed by the Turkish Parliament authorizing the Porte to proclaim the state of siege in Constantinople in case of necessity.

From the reply which I have returned to this despatch, and of which a copy is also inclosed, your Excellency will observe that, the state of siege having been actually proclaimed on the 24th ultimo, Mr. Layard addressed an urgent representation to the Porte that foreigners should be exempted from the application of this measure, and that a promise was thereupon given by the Grand Vizier that orders should be issued not to molest them in any way.

Mr. Layard has been instructed to inform the Porte that Her Majesty's Government expect that the assurances given by the Grand Vizier will be strictly adhered to, and that, in the event of their being infringed, they reserve to themselves the right of maintaining the privileges of British subjects under the Capitulations.

I have to request that your Excellency will communicate the substance of these despatches to the Government to which you are accredited, and that you will state that

* Similar despatches were addressed to Sir A. Paget, Sir A. Buchanan, and Mr. Macdonell.

† No. 1.

Her Majesty's Government would be glad to be informed what instructions, if any, have been sent by them to their Representative at Constantinople, with the view of maintaining the privileges of French subjects in consequence of the proclamation of a state of siege.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 145.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 226. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, on his return from St. Petersburgh, and placed in my hands a reply from his Government to the note which I had addressed to him on his departure from England. Of this reply I have forwarded to your Excellency a copy in my despatch No. 223 of this day's date.

Count Schouvaloff said that, in addition, and as a separate matter, he was authorized to offer an exchange of ideas on the question of the possible conditions of peace, supposing the Porte to be willing to come to terms before the Russian forces have crossed the Balkans.

His Excellency said that the discussion must be made subject to two conditions—firstly, that these confidential proposals should not be made public without his first having an opportunity of verifying the accuracy of any statements attributed to him; and, secondly, that in the event of Her Majesty's Government declining to enter on such an exchange of ideas, the terms proposed should not be communicated to the Porte.

To these conditions I agreed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 146.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Vivian.

(No. 70.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 145, Political, of the 25th ultimo, reporting the increased interest which the public in Egypt take in the progress of the Turco-Russian war, and I have to state to you that I approve the advice which you have given to Cherif Pasha as to the circulation of inflammatory telegrams.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 147.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 180 A.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

Sir,

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me to-day, and left in my hands a copy of a telegraphic despatch from the Porte calling the attention of the Powers to the declaration of independence by Roumania, and protesting against the decision taken by the Government of Prince Charles.*

I informed Musurus Pasha that Her Majesty's Government did not propose to take any steps in regard to the declaration of independence by Roumania.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 128.

No. 148.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 226. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon on his return from St. Petersburgh, and placed in my hands a reply from his Government to the note which I had addressed to him on his departure from England. Of this reply I have forwarded to your Excellency a copy in my despatch No. 223 of this day's date.

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His Excellency said that the discussion must be made subject to two conditions.

Firstly, that these confidential proposals should not be made public without his first having an opportunity of verifying the accuracy of any statements attributed to him; and, secondly, that in the event of Her Majesty's Government declining to enter on such an exchange of ideas the terms proposed should not be communicated to the Porte.

To these conditions I agreed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 149.

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.**

(No. 182. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 75 of the 7th of May, I transmit to your Excellency herewith, for your confidential information, a copy of a note from Prince Gortchakow to the Russian Ambassador in London.†

This note has been communicated to me by his Excellency Count Schouvaloff, and contains the Russian answer to the explanations as to the British policy which were furnished by Her Majesty's Government to Count Schouvaloff in my note of the 6th ultimo.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY

No. 150.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Stuart.‡

(No. 30. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 8, 1877.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith, for your confidential information, copies of correspondence which has passed between myself, his Excellency Count Schouvaloff, and the Russian Government, relating to the present war, and the attitude and policy of Great Britain.§

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* Similar despatches were addressed to Lord A. Loftus, Mr. Macdonell, Sir A. Buchanan, Sir A. Paget, and Lord Lyons.
† No. 129.
‡ Similar despatches were addressed to Mr. Vivian, Consul-General White, and Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.
§ Nos. 129 and 145.

No. 151.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 510. Secret.)
Therapia, May 24, 1877.

My Lord,

AT a private audience this morning the Sultan spoke to me about Montenegro. His Majesty observed that, owing to the continuation of hostilities with that Principality, the Porte was compelled to employ nearly 100,000 men on its frontiers and in the neighbouring country, at a time when all the troops that could be disposed of should be sent to the Danube. If peace could be made with Montenegro, 50,000 men at least could be moved at once to join the army in Roumelia, where they are most urgently required. The Sultan hinted that he would be very glad to make peace with the Principality, if Her Majesty's Government would offer their mediation. I asked His Majesty whether he was ready to make any territorial concessions to Montenegro, as I presumed that without them there was no prospect of the Prince listening to any overtures. His Majesty replied that he would be willing to do so, if they were not too large or unreasonable. But, he added, the proposal could not come from him. It could only come from Her Majesty's Government, and all he could tell me was that, if an offer of mediation was made by Her Majesty's Government, he was prepared to accept it. His Majesty requested me to consider what had passed between us on this subject as strictly secret.

I told the Sultan that I would inform your Lordship of what he had said, but that I did not know whether Her Majesty's Government would be inclined to accept the suggestion of mediation. I expressed my fear that, now that Russia had entered upon the war, the hopes of the Prince of Montenegro would be so much raised that there was little hope of his listening to any terms which Turkey could accept.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 152.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 512.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney stating that the Italian Consular Agency at Prevesa has been raised to a Vice-Consulate, and that it is rumoured that an Italian Consular Agency or Vice-Consulate will be established at Avlona.

The Italian Government seems of late to have directed more than ordinary attention to Albania, and their proceedings in that direction, and alleged intrigues amongst the Catholic populations, may justify the suspicions of Austria and other Powers that Italy has some designs of territorial annexation in that quarter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 152.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Layard.

Prevesa, May 19, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that the Italian Consular Agency at Prevesa has been raised to a Vice-Consulate, and that M. Pasquale Corti, who arrived here on Sunday last, has been appointed to that post. It is also rumoured that an Italian Consular Agency or a Vice-Consulate is also to be established at Avlona.

M. Corti has been transferred to Prevesa from Monte Video, South America.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

No. 153.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 513.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I COMMUNICATED to the Minister of War the substance of Mr. Consul-General Eldridge's despatch No. 51 of the 12th instant (copy of which was forwarded to your Lordship), relating to the necessity of keeping the Christian regiment of dragoons in the Lebanon. His Excellency stated that the Porte had never thought of removing this regiment, nor, up to this time, had any request been made by its officers to be sent to the seat of war. Should they do so his Excellency said he should not assent to their request without sending another regiment to replace them, and it was certainly more to the advantage of the Porte to employ in the war troops of which it could dispose here than to remove a regiment which had been most useful in Syria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 154.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 514. Confidential.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD received so many contradictory statements from Safvet Pasha with reference to the state of the negotiations between Turkey and Persia respecting the islet recently formed in the Shat-el-Arab, that I sent Mr. Sandison yesterday to his Excellency to request him to give me a categorical answer, which I might transmit to your Lordship, as to the real intentions of the Porte in the matter. I begged his Excellency to tell me whether the Turkish Government persisted in taking possession of this bank of mud at the risk of driving Persia into hostilities. His Excellency, after some hesitation, authorized Mr. Sandison to tell me that the Porte would direct Nassir Pasha, the Sheikh of the Montefic Arabs, who occupy the Turkish bank of the Shat-el-Arab, not to interfere with the islet provided that the Persians would engage not to raise any buildings on it until the question of the ownership to it is decided, which it will be when the Commission for the delimitation of the frontiers between Turkey and Persia resumes its labours.

I have the honour to inclose copy of Mr. Sandison's report of his interview with Safvet Pasha on the subject.

Having received this promise from his Excellency I went this morning to Moshir Khan and urged him to induce his Government to agree to his Excellency's proposal. He said that he considered it fair and reasonable, and that he would telegraph to Tehran to advise its acceptance. I telegraphed an account of what had passed on the subject to Mr. Thomson. If your Lordship would instruct him to support the Turkish proposal it would be useful.

The Persian Minister had complained to me that the Commissioner who had been named to inquire into the outrages upon Persians at Medina had not yet left Constantinople, although he had called upon him to take his leave, and his departure had been announced some days ago. I spoke on the subject this morning to the Grand Vizier, and he promised me that the Commissioner should go by the next boat to Egypt.

The only other misunderstanding at present existing between Turkey and Persia is the continued residence of Abbas Mirza at Bagdad, to which it appears to me the Shah attaches an exaggerated importance. I have again telegraphed to Colonel Nixon to use his best endeavours to induce the Prince to accept the Porte's invitation to Constantinople, and I should be much obliged to your Lordship if you would give Colonel Nixon similar instructions. Abbas Mirza can best show his gratitude for the hospitality shown to him by Turkey by doing what is required of him to prevent a quarrel between her and his own country.

I have begged the Persian Minister not to raise any other question which might lead to differences between the two Governments, as I know that he has a few ready in his diplomatic armoury. He declared that he would not, but he entered into a long account of Persia's grievance, founded upon the refusal of the Porte to admit her

to the benefit of the Capitulations with the European Powers. I told Moshir Khan that this was a very difficult matter which could not be discussed under present circumstances, and upon which I was not in a position to offer an opinion. At any rate, I said, it was not one in which Persia had a right to insist upon her pretensions, but one which could only be treated diplomatically.

The Porte has informed Moshir Khan that it intends to send very shortly an Ambassador to the Shah. If a conciliatory and moderate man be selected for the post, his mission may be productive of good.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 154.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, May 24, 1877.

Sir,

IN compliance with your Excellency's instructions, I strongly urged upon Safvet Pasha the advisability of not giving, particularly in a moment like the present, any cause for complaint or dissatisfaction to the Persian Government in connection with the disputed ownership of the islet on the Euphrates, which, in due course of time might, I added, be referred to the decision of the Turko-Persian frontier Commissioners, as justly proposed by the Persian Minister here.

I specially requested his Excellency for a categorical answer to the representations I had just made, which he at first declined to give me.

His Excellency ended, however, by saying that the Porte would direct Nassir Pasha at Bagdad not to interfere with the possession of the islet, provided the Persians would engage not to raise any buildings on it until the question of ownership be decided.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 155.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 515.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. STUART has been good enough to send me copies of his despatches to your Lordship Nos. 76 of the 5th May, referring to the escape of certain Greek brigands whom Hussein Pasha, the Governor of Janina, had undertaken to keep in confinement or under surveillance.

Mr. Stuart has fully described to your Lordship the circumstances of the case, and the impression which they have produced upon the Hellenic Government and upon public opinion in Greece. I thought the matter of sufficient importance to speak very seriously about it to the Grand Vizier, and to point out to him the folly of Turkey provoking Greece to a quarrel at the present time. I ventured to suggest to him that if Hussein Pasha, who enjoys no very good reputation, had really connived at the escape of these men, he ought to be punished at once; a proof would thus be afforded to the Hellenic Government that the Porte was in no way privy to his proceedings, but, on the contrary, strongly disapproved of them.

His Excellency promised that an inquiry should be made into the affair, and that if it were found that Hussein Pasha had intentionally, or carelessly, permitted the brigands to escape, he should be called to account for his conduct. His Highness assured me that the suspicion apparently entertained by the Hellenic Government that the men were allowed to get away in order to cause trouble in Greece and to occupy her troops by promoting brigandage, were entirely unfounded.

I telegraphed what the Grand Vizier had said to me to Mr. Stuart.

I may mention, confidentially, that I availed myself of an opportunity yesterday to speak to the Sultan of the importance of not giving any cause of quarrel to Greece, which might strengthen the hands of those who in that country were eager to take advantage of Turkey's difficulties, and were only restrained from doing so by the Hellenic Government. His Majesty expressed his entire concurrence in my views, and begged me to mention the subject to the Grand Vizier.

The Greek Minister informs me that his Government has given orders that if the escaped brigands have succeeded in entering Greece they are to be pursued with the utmost rigour, and if they are followed into Turkish territory by Greek regular troops, the Porte will be responsible for the consequences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 156.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 516.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. CONSUL SANDWITH has sent to your Lordship copy of his despatch to me of the 10th instant, relating to the refusal of the Christians of Crete to elect Representatives to the Turkish Chambers. I would venture to observe that the Cretans might retain their organic and local laws whilst sending Deputies to the Imperial Parliament. This has been done in other countries, for instance, in Spain, where the Basque provinces, whilst retaining their fueros, sent members to the Cortes. If Turkey is to be held together and to be reformed, it appears to me to be of the greatest importance to maintain a Parliament in which Representatives from all parts of the Empire can freely express their opinions and state their grievances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 157.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 517.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose the Decree placing Constantinople and its suburbs in a state of siege. I beg to draw your Lordship's attention to the statement in it that it is promulgated in accordance with the law passed by the Chambers.

This is an inaccurate statement, as the law has not passed the Senate, as required by the Constitution. This illegality may lead to serious consequences if the Chamber of Deputies protest against it, as I am informed they are about to do.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 157.

Decree.

Teskéré du Grand Vézir adressé au Séraskérat, décrétant, en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial, la mise en état de siége de Constantinople et de sa banlieue.

PAR Iradé Impérial la ville de Constantinople et sa banlieue sont déclarées, à partir d'aujourd'hui, en état de siége.

Conséquemment, en application de la loi martiale, il est décrété :

1. Les attributions et pouvoirs des autorités civiles sont transférées à partir d'aujourd'hui aux autorités militaires. Les individus qui chercheraient à troubler la tranquillité publique par des faits ou des paroles seront justiciables du conseil de guerre qui sera formé au Séraskérat. Ce conseil jugera sommairement et, suivant les degrés de culpabilité, prononcera définitivement, la peine capitale, les travaux forcés, l'emprisonnement dans une forteresse ou la prison. Ces peines seront immédiatement exécutées.

2. En cas de besoin, l'autorité militaire saisit les armes et les munitions de guerre de la population.

3. Elle ordonne, si elle le juge nécessaire, la perquisition domiciliaire pendant la nuit ou pendant le jour.

4. En cas de besoin, elle exile et expulse les individus suspects et ceux qui ont des antécédents mauvais et se trouvent sans domicile.

5. Elle suspend les journaux et toute publication cause d'excitation des esprits, et défend toute sorte de réunions populaires.

No. 158.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 518.)
Therapia, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Commander Drummond, of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid," now at Kustendji, giving a report of the state of affairs at that place, and requesting to be authorized to visit Varna and Sulina.

I have telegraphed to the Commander in the sense he desired.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 158.

Commander Drummond to Mr. Layard.

"Rapid," Kustendji, May 24, 1877.

Sir,

AFTER consultation with Lieutenant-Colonel Sankey, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, I have the honour to report on the state of affairs here.

It appears there is now no immediate danger apprehended in the town, that the Circassians and large quantities of bad characters have left, and that in consequence the presence of Her Majesty's ship, under my command, is unnecessary for the protection of the lives of British subjects. At the same time the Vice-Consul is of opinion that the occasional appearance of Her Majesty's ships on the coast would be advisable. Under these circumstances I think it expedient for the protection of British interests, and for the benefit of the ship's company, that I should occasionally put to sea, and visit the ports of Sulina and Varna in order to consult with Mr. Consul Reade and Commander Musgrave at the above-named place, and I should be glad if your Excellency would instruct me on this point.

The Governor here expects 15,000 (*sic*) Turkish troops to arrive shortly to hold the line of railway between Kustendji and Tchernavoda.

If they come, and there is at present no appearance of them, the tranquillity of the place would be assured.

Heavy firing is reported to have been heard at Tchernavoda in the direction of Hirsova, during the greater part of the night, and is still continuing.

The Danube is still rising.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. DRUMMOND.

No. 159.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 519. Most Confidential.)
Therapia, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Grand Vizier, when speaking to me this morning of the war, observed that he would be willing to put an end altogether to the connection between Turkey and Roumania, and to hand over the Principality to Austria. It was, his Highness said, of great importance to Austria to have it, as the Prince and leading statesmen of the Principality had publicly declared that their mission was to unite the Roumanian race, which meant that they were to deprive Austria of such part of her Eastern territories as are inhabited by Wallachians. It would also be of immense advantage to the peace of Europe to have between Turkey and Russia a strong Power like Austria.

It is rather late to think of this scheme now, even should Austria have been at

any time willing to entertain it; but it is my duty to report the Grand Vizier's suggestion to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 160.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 521. Secret.)
Therapia, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I WAS received yesterday by the Sultan in private audience to present to His Majesty Sir Collingwood Dickson, on his arrival at Constantinople as Military Attaché to Her Majesty's Embassy. His Majesty expressed his pleasure at seeing so distinguished an officer, and made many inquiries as to his former connection with Turkey and the Turkish army. His Majesty then spoke of the fall of Ardahan as a very unfortunate event, which had caused him great surprise. He said that he was quite unprepared for it, as he had been assured, only a short time before, that the fortress could not be taken by the Russians. Now he was told that the place was of no great importance, and that it could not be held against the enemy. He could not reconcile these contradictory statements. Either the place was important or not. If it commanded one of the roads to Erzeroum it ought to have been provided with proper and adequate means of defence; if it did not it was useless to place in it a force which, although considerable, was not sufficient to hold it, and which had consequently been defeated with severe losses in officers and men. His Majesty said that a strict inquiry was to be made into the causes of this disaster.

His Majesty asked me whether I had any information as to the military situation in Asia Minor? I replied that I had ventured to warn him some time back that the state of affairs in that quarter was very grave, and that the truth with respect to it had not been made known to him. I feared, I said, that even now His Majesty was unacquainted with the whole extent of the danger, and that he must be prepared for events even more disastrous than the fall of Ardahan. It was better, I added, to know the truth at once, and as His Majesty had encouraged me to speak frankly to him I would venture to tell it to him. It was the part of a true friend to do so. I placed in the hands of Said Pasha, who was alone present, a Memorandum which I had prepared from Sir Arnold Kemball's reports upon the state of the Turkish army in Armenia, and upon the necessity in which Moukhtar Pasha would be very shortly placed of abandoning the Soghanlee Dagh, and falling back upon Erzinghian, thus leaving Erzeroum and the whole of Armenia, except Kars and Batoum, which might hold out for a time, in the hands of the Russians. In this Memorandum I mentioned Sir A. Kemball's statements as to the utter want of proper organization in the army of Asia, its great inferiority in numbers, and in every other respect, to that of Russia, its bad distribution, and its want of all necessary supplies. Said Pasha briefly referred to the contents of the Memorandum, but His Majesty directed him to translate it word for word, and listened with the deepest attention. He then expressed his great surprise that Moukhtar Pasha could not hold the Soghanlee Dagh, and that he contemplated a retreat to Erzinghian, thus abandoning to the Russians Erzeroum and the whole Province. Nothing that the Minister of War had told him, he said, could lead him to believe that such was the case. His Majesty then made the most minute inquiries of Sir C. Dickson and myself as to the strategical points mentioned by Sir A. Kemball, and as to the movements of the Russian army, which threatened to turn the Turkish lines. Having satisfied himself on these points, he asked Sir C. Dickson what was now to be done? Sir Collingwood replied that he presumed that there only remained for Moukhtar Pasha to make every provision for the defence of Erzinghian, as if that place also fell the whole of the centre of Asia Minor would be at the mercy of the Russians.

Moukhtar Pasha appeared to be aware of this, as he was already doing something towards strengthening its fortifications; but it might be too late. At any rate, every effort should be made to render the place capable of holding out against the enemy.

After a long conversation as to the state of affairs in Asia, I called His Majesty's attention to the condition of his army in Europe. I referred to the inadequate measures which had been taken to place it in a condition to meet the Russians, should they succeed in crossing the Danube, and the want of proper provision for the defence

of some of the most important fortresses and positions in Roumelia. His Majesty requested Sir C. Dickson, who is well acquainted with the country which must shortly become the seat of war, to give him his opinion as to the state of the Turkish army, as to the means of defence against a Russian invasion, and as to the places that it was most important to occupy in force.

This Sir Collingwood Dickson was able to do from the valuable reports of Colonel Lennox, and from other trustworthy sources of information accessible to the Embassy. The Sultan listened attentively, and asked many questions which showed that he had carefully studied the matter. He observed that it had struck him that his army had been too much divided, being distributed in fortresses and positions along the Danube and elsewhere in insufficient numbers to resist the forces that Russia could bring against them, and that, consequently, they might be defeated in detail. Sir C. Dickson pointed out to His Majesty the great importance of the defensive lines formed by Shumla, Pravadi and Varna, and dwelt upon the inadequacy of the measures taken for their defence, Varna being without a sufficient number of guns, little or nothing having been done to fortify so important a place as Pravadi, and Shumla being without the necessary supplies for a prolonged siege or investment. Sir C. Dickson also suggested that an army of reserve ought to be formed, out of the new levies, at Adrianople, within the entrenchments about to be made round that city.

His Majesty observed that guns were being forwarded to Varna, and that there were already provisions in Shumla for some months, and that more were being sent there. I ventured to remark that in this case, again, everything came too late; and I pointed out that whilst Russia had been making her preparations for this war with the greatest care for some years, and was now perfectly prepared to enter upon it, Turkey had neglected in an inexplicable manner to take the most ordinary measures for her defence. I warned His Majesty, that although an extraordinary rise in the Danube had stopped for the present the Russian advance, if they ever crossed the river, he must be prepared for disasters in his European provinces no less grave than those in Asia.

The Sultan listened to me without any signs whatever of displeasure or impatience. He then said:—"I will make an admission to you which no Sultan perhaps has ever made to any one before. We have committed great faults, and we are now suffering for them. I say this with shame. I thank you for speaking to me frankly; it is a proof that you are my true friend. It is right and necessary that I should know the truth, and how am I to hear it except from a friend like yourself?"

He then made some remarks which gave me to understand that he was much dissatisfied with his Minister of War, and that he was about to remove him.

His Majesty referred to Montenegro, and expressed his regret that the war with that Principality occupied so large a body of troops (he said nearly 100,000 men), who ought to be sent without delay to reinforce the army on the Danube. I have reported His Majesty's remarks on this subject in my despatch No. to your Lordship of this date.

I then ventured to say to His Majesty that if there had been serious mistakes in military matters, there had also been serious errors in other directions. I referred, I said, to the relations between his Government and those of Persia and Greece. It was of the utmost importance to Turkey, I observed, that at such a moment as the present she should have no misunderstandings with these countries, her neighbours.

I briefly described the nature of the questions which had threatened to give rise to the differences to which I had alluded, and which it was of the greatest importance to settle at once. I had done my best to bring about an arrangement of them, and I hoped that His Majesty, in the interest of his country, would give me such support as would enable me to bring them to a satisfactory termination. His Majesty promised that he would do so, and begged me to lose no time in speaking to the Grand Vizier on the subject.

His Majesty then asked me many questions with reference to the position of the European Powers with regard to Turkey. He seemed particularly desirous of knowing what Austria intended to do. Did she mean to occupy Bosnia and the Herzegovina, and if so, as a friend or an enemy? Turkey, he said, had always endeavoured to maintain the most friendly and neighbourly relations with her, and Austria had the same interest as Turkey in keeping the Montenegrins and other Christian Slav populations quiet. His Majesty was also anxious to learn whether the reports that he had received that Servia was arming against Turkey were true. I told His Majesty that I had reason to believe that whatever might be the wish of certain persons in the Principality to attack Turkey, the Emperor of Russia had refused to encourage them,

and had warned them that if they did so it would be on their own responsibility, and that they were not to expect any support from him.

The Sultan said that he wished to have experienced European officers in his service. I observed that I knew that His Majesty had no such feeling against Europeans and Christians as were attributed to some of his advisers, who, it was alleged, had refused to employ foreign officers, much to the disadvantage of His Majesty's interests. His Majesty replied that he would see to this.

I remained with His Majesty for nearly two hours and a half. He entered into the questions we discussed with his usual clearness and good sense, and in the most frank and friendly manner. I may venture to say that no foreign Ambassador has ever before been privileged to speak with such freedom to a Sultan, and to place before him, in such dark, but, I fear, truthful colours, the real condition of his Empire. It says very much for His Majesty that he should have listened with perfect calmness and without impatience to statements that could not but make a very painful impression upon him. His manner when we left him was most kind and cordial. He begged Sir C. Dickson to come to him whenever he had anything of importance to tell him, and repeated his thanks to me, in very warm terms, for the proofs that I had given him of the interest I took in himself and his country by speaking thus openly to him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 161.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 522.) *Therapia, May 26, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE affair of the Softas, to which my telegram of the 25th instant referred, has been very much exaggerated, and the Grand Vizier and other Ministers rather lost their heads in dealing with it. The facts of the case are as follows:—

Some 300 young students, or Softas, chiefly from Asia Minor, came before the building in which the Turkish Parliament assembles, and asked to be admitted. They stated that they wished to ask why Ardahan had been allowed to fall into the hands of the Russians, and to demand the immediate dismissal of Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, and of Mahmoud Damat Pasha, the Sultan's brother-in-law, to whom they attributed the disaster.

They were refused admittance, and the President of the Chamber, Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, was informed of what was taking place. He immediately suspended the sitting, and, going out to the students, asked them what they wanted. They replied that they desired to state their grievances to the Chamber. The President told them that this was impossible, as it was against the Constitution; but if they chose to name one or two of their number to represent them they should see some of the Deputies, although they could not be admitted to a sitting of the Chamber. They then elected four youths to represent them, who were introduced into the hall where some of the Deputies had assembled. Their spokesman, a boy of between 17 and 18 years of age, was a native of Ardahan. He stated that he had left his father and mother there, and that they had fallen into the hands of the Russians. The surrender of the city and the advance of the Russians he attributed to the treachery or incapacity of the Ministers, upon whose instant dismissal his fellow-students insisted.

The President answered that the Softas had no right to present themselves as they had done before the Chambers, when they had, with the rest of the country, their Constitutional Representatives through whom they could state their grievances. He said that he should communicate their complaints to the Government, and he requested them to invite their fellow-students to disperse; which they immediately did, giving cheers for the Sultan and the President of the Chamber.

Ahmed Vefyk Pasha then went to the Grand Vizier, and subsequently with his Highness to the Palace, when the Sultan was informed of what had passed.

The Grand Vizier and his colleagues experienced unnecessary alarm, and prevailed upon His Majesty to sign at once a Decree proclaiming the state of siege in Constantinople. It is believed that they did so in order to prepare the way for a dissolution of the Chambers—a measure which has been pressed upon the Sultan by a strong party in the Palace, and which, if adopted, might lead to serious results. His Majesty was, no doubt, properly advised that to dismiss his two Ministers would have the appear-

ance of yielding to a threat; and two men, whose evil influence has been so fatal, will thus be allowed to remain a little longer in office. Had it not been for this foolish demonstration they would have fallen, I have reason to know, within twenty-four hours. I cannot doubt, from what I have heard from the Grand Vizier, and from an Englishman connected with Mr. Butler-Johnstone, that this gentleman was one of the principal promoters of this affair, the object of which, I am informed, was to prepare the way for the recall of Midhat Pasha.

Of course what occurred on this occasion has been immensely exaggerated. I may mention that I was dining on the day of the occurrence with the Austrian Ambassador, who had invited all the heads of Missions to meet me. I found my colleagues in a state of much alarm. They said that there had been a revolution in Stamboul; that 5,000 Softas had invaded the Chambers; that the Sultan had been compelled by force to change his Ministers; and that Ruchdi Pasha was named Grand Vizier. They were much surprised when I told them that I had not telegraphed a word of this sensational news to your Lordship, and that I intended to wait before doing so until I knew more of the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 162.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 523. Most Confidential.)
Therapia, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had occasion to mention in my despatches to your Lordship that Mr. Butler Johnstone, M.P., is in Constantinople. He has not called upon me, and does not, I understand, intend doing so. He lives entirely with the Mussulmans and in the house of a certain Ali Soavi, the head of the Lyceum. His object in being here is to urge the Turks to continue the war with Russia, and to help them as far as his means, which are considerable, I am told, will allow. With the latter object, he has brought Admiral Selwyn, Captain Manthrop, a retired naval officer, a Mr. Adams, Lieutenant Drummond, R.N., and others, most of whom are paid by himself, to teach the Turks various diabolical engines of destruction, which are to annihilate whole legions of Russians. One of the most effective of these inventions has, I hear, been offered to several Governments, and declined, whether on the ground of its being too horrible or too useless I cannot say. Experiments, however, have been made of its effects, partly in the presence of the Sultan, which appear to have been successful. Hobart Pasha appears to believe in its efficacy, and Mr. Adams is to accompany him when he goes upon his contemplated expedition against Russian ports in the Black Sea.

Sir Collingwood Dickson, who has made inquiries on the subject, is under the impression that the invention in question is one in which a certain composition (petroleum being the principal ingredient) can be used in shells of a very deadly character (emitting flames that are supposed to be unextinguishable), and fatal to human life by causing suffocation when thrown into casemates and other inclosed places. Sir Collingwood Dickson believes that this composition was proposed to Her Majesty's Government in 1854-55 by a person named Mackintosh, and rejected on the grounds of humanity.

In addition to these mischievous instruments of destruction with which Mr. Butler Johnstone supplies the Turks, he gives them, I am afraid, equally mischievous advice. As your Lordship is aware, these people are always more ready to listen to a person in his position than to one authorized to speak in the name of his Government. Mr. Butler Johnstone has, I believe, adopted to a certain extent the well-known opinions of Mr. Urquhart. He sees in every Turkish Minister a man bought by Russian gold, and thinks that, if Turks will only be Turks, and fight with the courage of despair, they will battle and defeat their secular enemy.

He is now, I am assured, intriguing with the persons amongst whom he is living, for the return of Midhat Pasha, and hence his alleged connivance with the demonstration of the Softas, to which I have referred in another despatch, and which appears to have been directed by the persons with whom he is living.

Mr. Butler Johnstone also furnished the money for the expenses of the Turkish deputation to Pesth. He seems to be of opinion, with Mr. Urquhart and his school,

that the Turks should make this war one of race and religion, and should have recourse to every means to render it so. By giving it this character, they will, he seems to think, be able to defeat the Russians, if not to destroy Russia. Anyone who does not agree with him, or the Ministers who do not act up to his views, are sold to Russia. The advice he gives to the Turks, founded on these views, cannot but be dangerous to them, especially when it is backed up by liberal help in money. The man with whom he resides, Ali Soavi, is known to be a Turk who shares Mr. Butler Johnstone's convictions, and as he has considerable influence on the Softas, he can do a great deal to give effect to them. The party to which Ali Soavi belongs is a strong one. Attempts are even now being made to make the war a religious one, and as the Emperor of Russia has given it, on his side, the character of a crusade against Islamism, the Sultan would be justified in the eyes of his subjects in retaliating upon Christianity. Such a determination might lead to frightful massacres. I know that there are persons who are threatening to incite the Mussulmans of India to rebellion in order to embarrass England, or to compel her to come to the help of Turkey. Upon this subject I shall have occasion to write to your Lordship more fully; and it is, I believe, known to Her Majesty's Government that the Porte is already seeking, by its Agents, to induce the Mussulmans of Algeria and Morocco to enter into a religious war against the Christians.

Under such circumstances, the advice given by Mr. Butler Johnstone to too willing listeners cannot be otherwise than extremely mischievous.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—It is right that I should add that, since I have written this despatch, I have learned that Mr. Butler Johnstone gives the most positive denial to the statement that he was in any way connected with the demonstration of the Softas.

A. H. L.

No. 163.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 525.)
Therapia, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of an encyclical addressed by the Greek Patriarch to the Metropolitans, Bishops, and faithful of the Greek Church, calling upon them to support the Sultan in resisting the invasion of Russia, and denouncing the war as unjust and as not being waged in the interest of the Christians, as alleged by the Emperor.

I am assured that this step on the part of the Patriarch is not to be attributed to any pressure from the Porte, but was taken after consultation with some of the leading and most influential men of the Greek community in Turkey. It is in accordance with the feelings and opinions expressed to me by a number of most intelligent and liberal-minded Greeks. The encyclical will have a considerable effect on the members of the Orthodox Greek Church, and, I am told on good authority, is likely to make some impression in Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 163.

Patriarchal Encyclical.

Aux Métropolitains, aux Evêques, et à tous les fidèles en général du trône œcuménique.

VOTRE pieuse communauté Orthodoxe connaît très-bien les graves événements qui troublent depuis quelque temps notre Gouvernement et tout l'Empire en général, événements qui ont malheureusement rendu inévitable une guerre terrible que l'Eglise a vu éclater avec un indescriptible serrement de cœur et une douleur profonde. L'Eglise, prenant en considération la gravité des difficultés politiques que soutient notre Gouvernement, et pour remplir un devoir sacré envers notre auguste Souverain, s'est

présenté de vous présenter dernièrement les exhortations de sa prévoyance ecclésiastique afin que vous conformant aux ordres précis de nos saintes écritures et à l'esprit de notre religion, vous donniez les premiers l'exemple d'une soumission absolue au trône Impérial et d'un accord fraternal avec les autres peuples de l'Empire ; afin que, comme vous l'avez toujours fait dans autre temps, vous fassiez encore aujourd'hui, dans les circonstances extraordinaires où nous sommes, preuves de dévouement envers notre Gouvernement, non-seulement par des paroles, mais encore par des actes ; non-seulement moralement, mais matériellement, en l'aidant de tout votre pouvoir à sortir des difficultés qui l'entourent. L'Eglise revenant aujourd'hui sur ces choses pour vous les recommander d'une manière plus particulière et exiger de vous que vous vous conformiez avec la plus grande exactitude à l'esprit de ses exhortations, comme vous l'ordonne non-seulement votre devoir envers votre auguste Souverain, mais encore votre intérêt bien entendu, l'Eglise vous rappelle ce qu'aucun de vous n'ignore que cette lutte terrible, que notre Gouvernement n'a accepté qu'avec peine et contre son gré, il le soutient pour repousser une attaque étrangère qui menace l'honneur et l'indépendance de l'Empire. Sans doute, et personne ne le nie, notre pays avait et a besoin de réformes, d'amélioration, afin de pouvoir développer ses immenses ressources et faire progresser la prospérité de ses peuples, mais les défectuosités de sa Constitution politique, défectuosités qui de temps à autres créaient de sérieux embarras à l'Empire, étaient depuis longtemps connus de notre Gouvernement, qui n'a jamais manqué de faire preuve de bonne volonté et a toujours marché d'un pas ferme et confiant au milieu des difficultés sans nombres à leur réformation ; et particulièrement le Prince qui tient aujourd'hui les rênes de l'état dès son avénement au trône glorieux de ses ancêtres, s'est empressé de reconnaitre franchement le mal et de porter courageusement remède ; une preuve éclatante des nobles et paternelles intentions de notre auguste Souverain est, sans contredit, l'octroi émanant de sa généreuse initiative, d'une Charte Constitutionnelle qui consacre, sans distinction de race ni de religion, la pleine égalité civile et politique des peuples réunis sous son sceptre, et qui certainement sera suivie de la promulgation des lois destinés à compléter la législation de l'Empire. Nous attendons de la réalisation des paternelles intentions de notre très-puissant Souverain la régénération de l'Empire, et son rétablissement au rang élevé qui lui appartient, et aussi le progrès de toutes les classes de ses sujets sans exception ; mais vous savez que le passage d'un système politique à un autre, ayant à lutter contre des difficultés de toutes sortes, n'est pas une chose aisée, et l'histoire d'aucun peuple ne vous offre d'exemple qu'un pareil œuvre se soit accompli en un jour. Chez nous, toutefois, un grand pas a été fait vers sa réalisation parceque les causes de notre malaise clairement aperçus et franchement reconnues, on a pris la ferme et généreuse résolution de les faire disparaître ; notre puissant et paternel Souverain et son Gouvernement éclairé s'avancent résolument vers le grand œuvre de la régénération de l'Empire, malgré les obstacles innombrables qu'ils rencontrent sur leur chemin. Ces généreuses prémices sont un gage précieux pour les peuples de l'Empire; qui laissant à un avenir prochain le soin d'achever l'œuvre commencée, peuvent dès aujourd'hui regarder comme assurés leur progrès et leur prospérité. Toutes les Grandes Puissances de l'Europe qui s'intéressent sincèrement au sort des Chrétiens de l'Orient, reconnaissent et apréciant à leur valeur les bonnes intentions de notre puissant Souverain et de son Gouvernement, et naturellement désire lui laisser le temps que demande leur réalisation ; mais l'une d'elle, malheureusement poussée nous ne savons par quel motif, mais à coup sur, par un motif tout autre que celui de l'intérêt des Chrétiens, a profité des difficultés intérieures de l'Empire pour lui déclarer une guerre injuste sous le prétexte de prendre la défense de tous les Chrétiens de l'Orient sans exception, mais en réalité dans le désir de poursuivre des avantages particuliers et exclusifs, ce que prouve jusqu'à l'évidence ses derniers agissements qui sont notoires.

Notre pays est devenu le théâtre de la guerre et la proie de tous les maux qui l'accompagnent. Vous sentez tous que le Gouvernement Impérial a le droit et le devoir de repousser de tout son pouvoir l'invasion injustifiable de notre territoire. L'Europe elle-même est pleinement en droit de penser que la Puissance qui nous attaque a été poussée à la guerre actuelle plutôt par des motifs d'intérêts particuliers que par le désir désintéressé d'améliorer le sort des Chrétiens, dont le véritable intérêt est dans le développement pacifique et régulier des institutions libérales dont la paternelle initiative de notre Souverain a doté le pays et qui lui assurent le progrès et la prospérité.

Ayant jugé à propos de vous rappeler toutes ces choses, d'abord nous adressons de nouveau au Dieu de paix et de miséricorde nos vœux et nos prières, pour que de Sa main puissante il éloigne de notre chère patrie cette guerre injuste et funeste et y

mette fin ; et, en second lieu, nous vous recommandons encore de donner à notre auguste Souverain, sans jamais vous relâcher, des preuves sincères et éclatantes de votre fidélité et de votre dévouement, et de soutenir de toutes vos forces notre Gouvernement dans la grande lutte où il se trouve engagé pour l'honneur et l'indépendance de notre patrie commune.

No. 164.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 526. Most Confidential.)

Therapia, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

THERE are intrigues, if not conspiracies, for replacing Sultan Murad on the Throne. The persons who are engaged in them pretend that he has entirely recovered his reason, and that he is kept in close custody in order that he may have no communication with the outer world. I understand that the Sultan has been asked to allow him to go in public to a Mosque to perform his Friday prayers. His Majesty has been advised not to do so, and his refusal has been attributed to His Majesty's fear of the effect which the appearance of his brother in restored health would have upon the public mind. It is asserted that when His Majesty accepted the Throne he made it a condition, some say in writing, that in the event of his brother's recovery he would resign it again to its rightful heir. I believe that there is some foundation of truth for this statement.

These attempts to bring back Sultan Murad are, no doubt, dangerous at the present time. There is a political party that pretends to believe that the present Sultan is under the influence of men who are sold to Russia, and are traitors to their country.

A suspicion to this effect is being excited amongst the Mussulmans, and might lead to very grave events. Any further disasters to the Turkish arms in Asia Minor, or reverses in Europe, would probably tend to strengthen it. Public manifestations on the part of the Softas, such as have already cost a Sultan his throne, might easily be brought about. The unpopularity of some of the men who are supposed to have influence in the Palace, such as Redif and Mahmoud Damat Pashas, is no doubt very great, and when anything goes wrong in this country charges against Ministers of treachery, and of being sold to Russia, are readily believed, and often as readily acted upon.

The Sultan is aware of what is going on, and is exceedingly anxious and nervous on the subject. There is some idea, I am told, of naming a Medical Commission, of which some non-Turkish physicians are to be members, to examine Sultan Murad, and to make a report upon the state of his health. Should that report be conclusive as to the incurable nature of his malady, he would perhaps be removed to Brousa, or some other city in the interior, where his presence would be less dangerous to the public tranquillity than in Constantinople.

Temple Bey, an English physician, who attends Sultan Murad, and a Greek doctor who frequently sees him, have assured me that the disease of the brain from which he suffers is incurable, and that, "medically speaking," there is no hope whatever of a return of reason. However, as long as he lives, and he remains in Constantinople, there will probably always be persons who, for political or other motives, would be ready to take advantage of his presence to attempt to bring about a fresh revolution.

Amongst the various stories invented to promote the intrigues to which I have referred, was one that I had seen Sultan Murad in secret, and had found him in strong health, with his mental faculties completely restored. This ridiculous invention of course obtained currency, like any other invention of the same kind, in Pera, and I was gravely asked to contradict it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 165.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 528.) *Therapia, May 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Porte has named a Military Commission to control and inquire into all contracts and matters connected with the Turkish armies. The following experienced officers are its members:—Mehmet Rushdi Pasha, ex-Grand Vizier; Namik Pasha, Senator; Halim Pasha, Senator; Said Pasha, Governor of the Palace; Ali Nizami Pasha, General; Mehmoud Pasha, General; and Nafyz Pasha, First Chamberlain.

Redif Pasha, the Minister of War, is nominally the President of the Commission, but Réouf Pasha, the Minister of Marine, will, it is understood, practically fill that office.

The appointment of this Commission is considered a mark of the want of confidence of the Sultan in his Minister of War.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 166.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 529.) *Therapia, May 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

I INFORMED your Lordship, in my telegram of 13th instant, that the Sultan had expressed his intention of extending the conscription for the army to his Christian subjects. The Grand Vizier states to me that there is no question, as yet, of applying the measure generally to all the Christians in the Empire, the Porte's intention being to carry it out gradually to prevent causing discontent. The only decision yet come to, his Highness states, is to apply the measure in the first instance to Constantinople, the inhabitants of which having hitherto enjoyed exemption from military service, are now to be required to furnish a contingent of 6,000 men, composed of Mussulmans and Christians.

Although some persons have denounced the non-admission of Christians to the army as one of their main grievances against the Turkish Government, the Christians themselves do not look upon it quite in the same light. The report that they are to be included in the conscription has already caused a considerable commotion among them, and urgent remonstrances have been addressed to the Porte on the subject by their Patriarchs and other Chiefs. They allege that, whilst admitting the principle that Christians should serve in the army, they think the time inopportune for applying it. They maintain that before doing so the Porte should have properly educated Christian officers, and that "cadres" of the regiments to include Christians should first be formed.

Until the Christians are called upon to serve in the army on precisely the same footing as their Mussulman fellow-subjects, their equality with them will not be fully established or admitted. But it is not a matter of surprise that they should resent being deprived of so great a privilege as exemption from military conscription.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 167.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 530.) *Therapia, May 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Minister of the Interior informs me that the state of siege has been proclaimed principally with the object of removing from the capital persons suspected of being engaged in conspiracies against the Government, and believed to be dangerous to the public peace. Among the first to be banished to Broussa were Kemal Bey; Ismail Bey (who was on the Commission for the investigation of the outrages in Bulgaria); Akiah Effendi; Emin Effendi, son of a Casaskier; and Yusuf Bey, an ex-Chamberlain of the Palace. They are all connected officially with the Porte.

Several Softas have also been arrested. These persons are accused of being engaged in a plot to bring back Midhat Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 168.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 531.) *Therapia, May 28, 1877.*

My Lord,

REPORTS having been spread in Constantinople that Persia was about to unite with Russia in attacking Turkey, Moshin Khan has been requested by the Porte to deny this. He has in consequence addressed a note on the subject to Salvet Pasha for publication, declaring that these rumours are unfounded.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 168.

Newspaper Extract.

SON Excellence Mohsin Khan, Ministre de Perse à Constantinople, vient de remettre une note à son Excellence le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, à l'effet de démentir les bruits relatifs aux intentions belliqueuses de la Perse.

Voici la traduction de cette note:—

"Excellence,

"J'ai l'honneur de porter à la connaissance de votre Excellence qu'à la suite de notre entrevue relativement aux bruits qui circulent parmi le public de Constantinople et dans quelques-uns des journaux concernant une rupture imminente de relations entre les deux Etats Musulmans j'avais télégraphié à Téhéran pour demander des instructions se rattachant à cet état de choses.

"Son Altesse le Commandant-en-chief des armées de Perse m'ordonne par télégramme d'assurer la Sublime Porte des intentions pacifiques du Gouvernement Persan, et de donner un démenti officiel et solennel à ces bruits, qui se trouvent en contradiction avec les bons rapports des deux Puissances coreligionnaires et des principes de l'Islamisme, que le Gouvernement Persan ne cessera de respecter loyalement.

"Heureux d'avoir été appelé à donner communication de cette dépêche officielle, je prie, &c."

Le 28 Rébi-ul-Akhir, 1294.

No. 169.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 535. Very Confidential.) *Therapia, May 29, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE Porte has been informed that a change of Ministry in Greece is imminent, and that M. Deligeorgis will be replaced by M. Coumoundouros. It has further learnt that, in the event of this taking place, M. Condouriottis, the present Greek Representative here, will be recalled, and that M. Zaimis will be sent in his stead. The latter gentleman is believed to be very hostile to Turkey, and his presence here would not be very welcome to the Turkish Government. With M. Condouriottis they are perfectly satisfied, and he seems to have done his best to prevent misunderstandings arising between the two countries.

I have informed Mr. Stuart of the feeling of the Porte about M. Zaimis, in case he may be able to do anything to prevent his appointment as Minister here.

I am trying my best to induce the Turkish Government to avoid doing anything to

cause difficulties with Greece; and, as they profess themselves disposed to take my advice, it is very important that the Greek Government should act with moderation and in a conciliatory spirit towards them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 170.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 537. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 29, 1877.*

HOBART PASHA has at length left Constantinople to join the Turkish fleet in the Black Sea. He complains that in consequence of the intrigues of Rediff Pasha, and of others in the Government who are opposed to the employment of foreigners, he has hitherto been kept from commencing operations against the Russians, and he states that he has now gone off without orders. He says that he feels it his duty to do so, as without his presence, and in consequence of the ignorance and carelessness of the Turkish naval authorities, the fleet is exposed to very great danger. The Russians are using torpedo boats, and he fears that more important vessels may meet with the same fate as the gunboat which has just been blown up on the Danube.

I understand that Hobart Pasha intends, after inspecting the fleet, to visit various parts of the Russian coast of the Black Sea, but that he does not think that the measures in preparation for making a serious attack upon any important Russian port are yet sufficiently advanced.

The Commander-in-chief on the Danube has applied for three more ironclad gun-boats, but there are none at the disposal of the Minister of Marine to send him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 171.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 538. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

MR. FOSTER, the Director of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, leaves Constantinople to-day for Paris and London. He goes at the urgent invitation of the Porte to endeavour to help in effecting some financial combination which may enable the Turkish Government to get some ready money, of which they are greatly in need.

Safvet Pasha informs me that your Lordship has declined to name a person who would investigate the state of the Turkish finances and recommend necessary reforms. It further appears that Musurus Pasha has hitherto failed in inducing any competent Englishman to undertake the task. Under these circumstances it is probable that the Porte may request Mr. Foster to take the matter in hand, and they think of associating with him M. Frémy, the well known French financier, who has offered to serve the Turkish Government in their difficulties, and who has now been invited to Constantinople by the Grand Vizier.

I have seen M. Frémy's plan for the reform of the Turkish finances, which appears to me simple and judicious. His first object, he says, will be to submit them to a thorough examination so as to get at the truth, and to be able to ascertain exactly what the real amount of revenue and expenditure is. When that is done, he proposes to institute reforms in the collection of the revenue and in the financial administration, and at the same time to place before the creditors of Turkey a full and trustworthy statement as to her financial condition. The surplus of revenue over expenditure is then to be applied, as far as it will go, to the payment of the interest on the foreign debt.

These are the main principles of the scheme as far as I could understand it. They are those which I have been pressing upon the Porte; but the difficulty in the way of getting at the truth as to the Turkish revenue and expenditure is perhaps greater than M. Frémy may expect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 172.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 539.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

THERE has been a landing of Greek brigands, or pirates, in the vicinity of Dedeaghatch, the terminus of the railway between that place and Adrianople.

They are stated to have carried off a Christian notable, and one or two other persons. Mr. Blunt believes that this outrage may indicate a design to eventually destroy or interrupt this important line of communication by a *coup de main*, and that the Porte would do well to station a ship-of-war on the coast, and to take other measures for its protection.

If this war is prolonged and takes a wider character, there may be a danger of the revival of Greek piracy in the Mediterranean.

I have brought this subject to the notice of Safvet Pasha, and of the Minister of Marine.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a despatch from Mr. Blunt, giving further details on the subject, copy of which, with its inclosure, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship.

A. H. L.

Inclosure 1 in No. 172.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, May 27, 1877.*

WITH reference to my ciphered despatch, telegraphic, to your Excellency of yesterday's date, I have the honour to inclose herewith extract of a letter from Mr. Leonard Willshire, a British merchant at Dedeagatch, giving an account of the Greek brigands who have recently landed at Maeri.

I have also heard from other reliable sources that a great deal of gunpowder has been recently smuggled into the country at Enos, Maronia, and other places on the coast.

Maronia is at a short distance of Dedeagatch, the maritime terminus of the Philippopolis and Adrianople Railway. The importance of this line of communication is obvious, and I would beg again to impress on your Excellency the urgent necessity of precautions being taken by the Porte for securing it against interruption by a *coup de main*.

I regret to state that a great increase of Circassian robberies is reported to have taken place in the very districts from which the police have already been withdrawn for military service at the seat of war, a state of things which I anticipated and pointed out in my despatch to your Excellency of the 10th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 172.

Mr. Willshire to Consul Blunt.

(Extract.) *Dedeaghatch, May 25, 1877.*

THE day before yesterday the authorities of this place were informed that a small Greek vessel ("bombard") had landed not far from Maeri a band of brigands, of about sixty individuals, who immediately made for the mountains. Yesterday the news came that these brigands, about thirty strong, went to the village of Maronia, about five hours from Maeri, and there in full day seized on one of the rich inhabitants of the place, named Gheirko Thoma, and carried him off with them. They now refuse to set him at liberty, unless he pays them a ransom of 2,000*l.* Turkish. I am told that the authorities at Gumulina have sent some policemen after them, and that a good many villagers have joined them to rescue Thoma, but I am much afraid they

will not succeed. The police in these parts is very insufficient in number, and unable to cope with so many brigands. As to the villagers, one cannot reckon much on their services.

At the same time we heard of the doings of the Greek brigands we also learnt that the Circassians near Enos were again practising their lawless pursuits. A band of them attacked some Bulgarians who were guarding some horses and cattle belonging to persons of Enos. The Bulgarians showed fight, and managed to beat the Circassians off and to arrest two of them. In this conflict three Bulgarians were wounded, and I am told that one has since died. It is said that the two Circassians were consigned to the authorities, but that their companions presented themselves and obliged them to be given up.

The doings of the Circassians have created terror in all the villages about Enos, and it is said that the villagers are swarming to Enos for protection.

I believe Mr. J. Rossy has reported the subject to the Consul-General.

No. 173.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 540. Confidential.)

Therapia, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a valuable report addressed to me by General Sir Collingwood Dickson, with reference to the military operations now taking place in Turkey in Europe and in Asia Minor, founded on the numerous despatches received at the Embassy from Colonel Lennox and Sir Arnold Kemball.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 173.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, May 29, 1877.

Sir,

SINCE my arrival here on 20th instant to place myself under the orders of your Excellency as Military Attaché, I have read and considered all the various reports, letters, and despatches received by you from Major-General Sir A. Kemball, Colonel Lennox, and officers employed with them, as well as those sent to you by the Consuls from various places at or adjacent to the seat of war; and I will now endeavour to give you a short abstract of these reports, with my opinion thereon, with such remarks as I may have to make upon the offensive and defensive arrangements of the Turkish armies, as far as my present knowledge of the state of affairs extends.

I will first take the reports of Colonel Lennox and Lieutenant Chermside on the state of the works and fortresses in Bulgaria, on the Danube, and elsewhere, and on the manner in which the Turkish forces are distributed for the defence of the extensive river line and country in their rear to the Balkan Mountains. From the very able and valuable reports of Colonel Lennox, it appears that much valuable time has been wasted during the past winter and spring in preparing the great and important fortresses and works on the Danube, extending from Widdin to Silistria, a distance of over 200 miles. At many of these places the defences, even at the present date, are far from complete; and, though the work is now being carried on with more vigour and diligence, I gather from the accounts given that, even with the time now at their disposal, the Turkish forces will hardly be able, in some of these fortresses (unfortunately the most important of them) to put them in that complete state of defence required to resist the attack of such a formidable and well-equipped army as the Russians are now bringing against them.

The bad weather, which has hitherto prevented the Russians from attempting the passage of the river, has been in favour of the Turks, and it remains for these latter to make the most strenuous exertions to resist their enemy. At Rutschuk, Silistria, and Varna, the armaments for the works are still incomplete, and many more heavy guns are required to complete them. At Varna, for example, a short time back, 60 guns were required to complete the armament, there being only 26 guns mounted in its works. This very serious and alarming deficiency has been duly represented to the

Turkish War Department, and 30 guns were lately dispatched to Varna, and an assurance was given that 30 more guns would follow immediately. It is to be hoped they have been sent by this time. It is true that the other works mentioned, as Rutschuk, Widdin, and Silistria, &c., though still incomplete, are in a much better state as regards armaments, &c., than Varna, and its present condition is due to the withdrawal of its heavy guns, ammunition, &c., which were sent up to arm the other fortresses on the Danube, which were considered as of more immediate importance, but steps ought to have been at once taken to replace these armaments at Varna. It is due to Abdul Kerim Pasha, the Turkish General-in-chief on the Danube, to state that he has been incessantly making known all these requirements to the Government at Constantinople, and urging immediate steps to be taken to meet them. Of ammunition of all kinds, both for artillery and infantry, the reports speak of the supplies being fairly adequate, and further supplies are being sent up to the army and the different fortresses. The great danger and difficulty will, I fear, be the inadequacy of the supplies of provisions for the garrisons, and Colonel Lennox does not report very favourably on this point, though I understand great efforts are being made to remedy this deficiency. This is the most serious question of all, for, when the Russians have succeeded in passing the river, these places will be besieged or blockaded; and, upon the length and energy of their defence, the fate of the war will greatly depend. The Turks can defend their fortresses with valour and obstinacy, but the efforts of the bravest men must succumb to famine.

At Schumla new works are being erected to complete the chain of defences round that important place, which, being the head-quarters of a corps d'armée of reserve, will not only be a fortress, but a strong entrenched camp; here also much remains to be done, though the works are being carried on vigorously, but heavy guns are required to complete the armaments, and it will be some time before it can be said to be in a good state of defence. The distance between Schumla and Varna is about 60 miles, and midway between them is the town of Pravadi, a most important position, the occupation of which maintains and protects the communications between Varna and Schumla, and from its situation is capable of being strongly fortified. But very little has been done here; there are old redoubts round the place which are partially armed, but in order to render it formidable as a defensive position for a corps d'armée operating defensively between Schumla and Varna, these works must be improved and repaired, and new ones constructed on the heights round the town, and these ought to be heavily armed. This is a question of very great importance, and it is to be hoped that no time will be lost in completing the defences of Pravadi.

Mr. Blunt, Her Majesty's Consul at Adrianople and Salonica, reports from the former place, on the 14th instant, that the passes of the Balkan Mountains from Sofia to the Black Sea, where the range terminates near Bourgas, are now being fortified; the plans are prepared by Turkish engineer officers, and the people of the different districts have been called upon to assist the troops in their labours, and furnish implements for work and materials—all the works are now being carried on.

Lieutenant Chermside, R.E., has furnished a valuable report on the Dobrudja, and especially on the defence of the line formed by the old Roman wall (Trajan's) between Kustendjé on the Black Sea and Tchernavoda on the Danube, a distance of about 30 miles. This report describes fully the position to be occupied by a corps d'armée defending the line in question, showing all its advantages and disadvantages. The report being voluminous, I can only remark shortly upon it. A corps occupying the position could, if well commanded, delay for some time the advance of an enemy. For this purpose Kustendjé ought to be protected by field works (for which the high ground around affords great facilities), and would be occupied by a sufficient garrison, which, in the event of the position being taken, could escape by sea. The corps d'armée defending the line should take position with its left resting upon the Danube, and its front would be protected by the marshy ground and shallow lakes near Tchernavoda. This line would not be tenable, however, should the Russians cross the Danube between Tchernavoda and Silistria, and, of course, the maintenance of the position must depend upon a very strict watch being kept on this portion of the river, and a prompt retreat upon Varna would be necessary should the Russians succeed in crossing in force. In case of the front at Tchernavoda only being threatened, the Turkish corps would cover its line of retreat upon Silistria and also that upon Varna, and should the Russians execute a turning movement round the Turkish right, they would place themselves between the seat and the defending army.

A recommendation has also been made that a large corps d'armée should be assembled at once at Adrianople, round which city works are about to be erected to

form an intrenched camp. This army of reserve should be composed of the latest levies, with such proportion of regular troops as can be spared, and these should be brigaded and trained as rapidly as possible. This force would cover the approaches to Constantinople, and be a rallying-point for an army retiring behind the Balkans. In order to facilitate the defence of the long line of the Danube, moveable corps with field artillery, placed under the most able and intelligent commanders that can be found, should operate between the large fortresses, watching the Russians with vigilance and ready to oppose any attempt on their part to cross the river, and so time would be gained for reinforcements to be sent from the strong garrisons of the nearest fortresses. The above important suggestions have been made to the Turkish Government in a private way through the War and other Ministers, and they ought to be adopted and carried out at once. Colonel Lennox reports upon the indifferent state of the military hospitals and the deficiency of comforts and medicines for the sick and wounded. This ought to be seen to, and I would respectfully suggest to your Excellency that some representation should be made on the subject to the sanitary authorities in Constantinople.

With regard to the reports from Major-General Sir A. Kemball, I have perused and found them most interesting and important, but, in the present state of affairs in Asia Minor, with a defending army falling back before a powerful Russian army, and which has been obliged to abandon position after position to them, it is impossible to foresee what events may occur at any moment, and Sir A. Kemball's reports have hitherto prepared us for the worst. I think, moreover, that Erzinghian ought still to be kept as the point upon which to retire in the event of the army having to fall back, and leave Erzeroum to defend itself, or be taken; and no efforts ought to be spared at this very time to strengthen the defences of Erzinghian and render it a strong place of refuge for the retreating Turkish forces, and it is hoped that Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha has taken his measures accordingly. It would be a great thing if it were possible to utilize the Kurdish and Circassian irregular horsemen by getting European officers to endeavour to put them into some kind of organization, and so render them valuable for many purposes necessary to and of vital importance to an army in the field, which has at present to contend with one possessing a large force of cavalry. I only fear it may be too late to carry this valuable suggestion of Sir A. Kemball's out. Time will not allow me to continue any further remarks upon the reports of the officers serving under your orders at different places, but I trust I have been able to place before your Excellency the position of affairs as gleaned by me from these reports; and I only regret that the state of the war in Asia, and the rapidity with which events are proceeding there, prevent me from more fully entering upon them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General, Military Attaché.*

No. 174.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 543.) *Therapia, May* 30, 1877.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH Baker Pasha is still suffering from a severe attack of illness, he has been able to commence the organization of the gendarmerie, or mounted police, which he has undertaken to raise and discipline for the Turkish Government. I have the honour to inclose a sketch of his scheme, and the list of the officers whom he has named to act under him, but whose appointments have not yet been confirmed by the Porte. I have received them from Baker Pasha himself.

It is generally expected that this mounted police will render great service to Turkey in maintaining order and in affording security to life and property. Its organization affords a proof of the desire of the Porte to carry out the recommendations of the Conference. The Sultan has taken much interest in it, and he expressed to me his hope when I last saw him that it would fulfil the expectations that he had formed of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 174.

List of Officers selected for Appointments in General Baker's Gendarmerie.

IN accordance with General Baker's scheme the appointments to be made in the gendarmerie are as under:—

1 Major-General Commanding.
2 Corps Inspectors.
4 Divisional Inspectors.
12 Brigade Inspectors.
1 Captain Instructor.
6 Non-Commissioned Officers Instructors.

Of these the following have already been named for appointment:—

Major-General Baker.

No Corps Inspectors as yet selected.

Divisional Inspectors:

(1.) Lieutenant-Colonel Shuldham, late of Her Majesty's Indian Army; served in the Burmese campaign of 1852, and was A.D.C. to General Neil during the Indian Mutiny.

(2.) Major Fawcett, late 7th Royal Fusiliers; served in India with that regiment for some years, and subsequently until October 1875, as Captian and Adjutant Royal Cumberland Militia.

(3) and (4) not yet appointed.

Brigade Inspectors:

(1.) Major Lightfoot, late Her Majesty's Indian Army; served during the Indian Mutiny, attached to the 20th Punjaub Native Infantry. In 1864 as Brigade Major Bhootan field force. Bt. of Major, 11th September, 1872.

(2.) Captain Swire, late 97th Regiment; served in the Crimea as A.D.C. to Brigadier-General MePherson, and was present at both assaults of the Redan—dangerously wounded. Served in the Indian Mutiny as A.D.C. to Sir C. Windham, and was present at the defence of Cawnpore.

(3.) Major Astley, late 49th Regiment; served in the Crimea and subsequently on the Staff of the School of Musketry and also as District Inspector of Musketry at Malta and at Bombay.

(4.) Major A. Fawcett, late 9th Lancers; served in the Crimea, present at Alma and Inkerman, also throughout the Indian Mutiny. Medal with three clasps and a year's service for Lucknow.

(5.) Captain Blunt, late 44th Regiment; at the siege of Sebastopol and subsequently employed in Her Majesty's Civil Service.

(6.) Captain Coope, late 7th Royal Fusiliers; served in the Crimea with the 57th Regiment, and was present at the assault on the Redan of the 18th June.

(7.) Major Erle, late 21st Bengal Native Infantry; served for some years on staff appointments in the Bengal Police.

(8.) Captain Lynge, late 52nd Light Infantry; has resided in Turkey for the last five years.

(9.) Captain Briscoe, late 15th Hussars; was for some years adjutant of that regiment.

(10.) Captain Allix, late Grenadier Guards.

(Signed) V. BAKER.

No. 175.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 546. Most Confidential.) *Therapia, May* 30, 1877.

My Lord,

SINCE my arrival in Constantinople, my main object has been to prepare the way for peace. I have thought that in doing so I should best carry out the wishes and intentions of Her Majesty's Government. I had this end in view, as I informed your Lordship at the time, when I induced the Porte to appeal to the Powers for their mediation under the VIIIth Article of the Treaty of Paris.

I had little hope that war could be averted by this step, but it appeared to me that it might afford an opening for the interference of those Powers in the interests of peace on some future occasion.

With the same object I have endeavoured to gain some influence over the mind of the Sultan, in order that, when the time came, I might perhaps reconcile him to such conditions as are likely to be imposed upon Turkey after any decided success on the part of Russia.

I have in my private audiences with His Majesty placed before him, without reserve, the true condition of his Empire, and the nature of the hopeless struggle into which evil counsellors have led his country. Fortunately, I have found His Majesty willing to listen, without impatience, to such counsels and information as I have ventured to give him. I believe him to have qualities of intellect and heart which may lead him, if properly directed, to profit by them.

During the darkness which has shrouded this unhappy Turkish question, and has apparently hid its true bearing and significance from many able and farseeing statesmen, there have been gleams of light which, had they been taken advantage of with wisdom and decision, might have saved humanity from the calamities of war, and have averted a grave danger to the paramount interests of the British Empire. Such may possibly be the case at the present moment. The opening of the war has not been quite so favourable to Russia as she appears to have expected. The extraordinary rise in the Danube has checked her advance on the side of Europe, and has enabled Turkey to increase her means of resistance. Although the Porte might, no doubt, have done more in this respect, there is no doubt that the difficulties of the Russian campaign in Roumelia have been much increased by the delay, and although Russia may succeed in the end, it will probably be at a greater sacrifice than she may have at first contemplated. On the other hand, in Asia she has been more successful; and, judging from the reports of Sir Arnold Kemball, and information derived from other trustworthy sources, although she may not have made all the progress she anticipated, she will, within a very short time, have in her possession the whole of the very important Province of Armenia, with the exception perhaps of Kars and Batoum. The simultaneous attack on the European and Asiatic territories of Turkey has not, therefore, led to all the results upon which Russia apparently counted.

According to information derived from various sources, it would appear that the rise in the waters of the Danube, and the consequent floods over the surrounding country, will render its passage very difficult, if not impossible, for three or four weeks to come. Does not this delay afford an opening for another effort in the interests of peace? The position of affairs is this: Russia has succeeded in Asia, and thus she holds a material guarantee for what she may require on behalf of the Christians of Turkey in the shape of a province; in Europe she cannot be said to have yet succeeded, and she will probably have to encounter a desperate resistance, and to make vast sacrifices, before she can impose her own terms upon the Porte. Moreover, the longer the war lasts, the greater the risk of drawing other Powers into it against her.

If hostilities be prolonged, Turkey, in her despair, may have recourse to measures to embarrass and injure Russia, which may, to a certain extent, effect that object. Although the rising in the Caucasus may not have the importance that has been attributed to it, and the negotiations between the Porte and the revolutionary and national leaders in Hungary and Poland may not lead to serious results, they are undoubtedly a danger to Russia.

The real intentions of Russia would also be brought to a test by proposing to her, at this moment, a mediation. If her real object is, as she asserts, the improvement of the condition of the Christian populations, she has surely now the means of obtaining a satisfactory guarantee for it. The Turkish Government, it must be admitted, has already done a good deal in the direction pointed out by the Powers at the Conferences and in the Protocol of London. It is prepared to do more, and would do more, if the war so unjustly and unnecessarily waged against Turkey by Russia permitted it. The lesson which the Porte has received has, no doubt, made it see the absolute necessity of complying with the demands of Europe, without even the material guarantee which Russia may require.

If, on the other hand, Russia has the ambitious designs generally attributed to her, and has entered upon this war for the purposes of territorial aggrandizement, her professions of humanity and disinterestedness can now be gauged, and Her Majesty's Government will be able, at least, to judge what her real objects and intentions are, and how far the interests of the British Empire may be affected or endangered by them.

It must not, however, be inferred that the Porte will be so easily induced to

make peace, even were it in extreme peril. My hopes of peace are chiefly founded upon the Sultan, and if the moment came for offering mediation it would be to him that I should address myself in the first instance. There are some Turkish statesmen who see the dangers which threaten their country, and who would feel the absolute necessity of bringing the war to an end almost at any sacrifice. It is scarcely necessary to specify the arguments that would weigh with them; the hopelessness of looking to England or any other Power for help; the utter want of money to carry on the struggle, the inferiority of the Turkish armies to those of Russia, and the imminent risk of the dismemberment of the Empire; but it must not be forgotten that there are other Turkish statesmen, supported by no inconsiderable party, and relying especially upon the popular religious feeling, or "fanaticism," as it is called in the case of Mussulmans, who are prepared to run all these dangers and risks, and who think that, by persisting to the very last in a life and death struggle with the enemy of their race and faith, by appealing to the whole Mahommedan world for support, and by counting upon the interests and fears of the other European Powers, who at the last moment will, they are convinced, place themselves on the side of Turkey; she will in the end not only prevail against Russia, but be enabled to assert for herself an independence of foreign interference and control of which her submission to Europe has hitherto deprived her.

It will be necessary to bear these considerations in view should the Powers decide upon making an attempt to induce Russia to listen to an offer of mediation, and especially if they are called upon to propose terms of peace. Whilst Russia might desire to exact much, no Turkish Ministers could accept very hard or humiliating conditions without risking their own lives, and even that of the Sultan, and without exposing the Christian populations to a massacre.

Although, unhappily, a too successful attempt has been made to induce the English people to sacrifice the highest interests of humanity and of their country to the lesser interests of both, I may be excused for pointing out the dangers to England of a prolongation of the war, and of a complete subjugation of a large part of the Empire by Russia. Should Russia desire to annex at this time any of the European provinces of Turkey, European interests would probably be called into play, and she would be prevented from carrying out her intentions. The influence, however, which she would inevitably establish over these populations would be almost tantamount to absolute possession, and would enable her to annex them, sooner or later, when she could do so with impunity; but as regards the acquisition by her of territory in Asia Minor the case is different. The interests of England would then be alone concerned. It would probably signify little to the rest of Europe whether Russia retained Armenia or not. But England has to consider the effect of the annexation to Russia of this important province upon the British possessions in India. Russia would then command the whole of Asia Minor and the great valley of the Euphrates and Tigris, which would inevitably fall into her hands in the course of time.

Persia, moreover, would be placed entirely at her mercy. The suspicion that Russia has already made secret offers to Persia to assist her in acquiring the province of Bagdad in exchange for Ghilan and Mazanderan may be unfounded; but the fact that it exists, and has been entertained by persons not generally ill-informed, proves that this consideration is one not to be altogether lost sight of. In most cases, when the evident interests of two parties are concerned in effecting an exchange, the exchange is sooner or later effected. The desire of Persia to possess the province of Bagdad and the holy shrines of their prophets and martyrs is of very ancient date, and is shared by the whole Persian nation. On the other hand, the possession of the entire coast of the Caspian Sea, and the direct road through a rich and well-inhabited country to Herat and Afghanistan, and ultimately to India, is a matter of vast political importance to Russia. Such being the case, there is every reason to believe that when Persia finds that the Turkish Empire is threatened with dismemberment her own interests will get the better of any sympathy for it founded upon community of faith, and that, completely under the control of Russia, she will not be indisposed to agree to an arrangement which would be acceptable to the religious feelings and to the ambition of the Persian people. The possession by Persia of the Province of Bagdad would be, as far as England is concerned, its possession by Russia.

It must not be forgotten that the possession of Armenia by Russia as regards any designs that she may have upon India, supposing her to entertain them, would

be very different from that of any part of Turkestan or Central Asia. In Armenia and the north of Persia she would have a hardy and abundant population, affording her excellent materials for a large army, ready at any time to advance upon our Indian frontier, and resting upon a convenient and sure base of operations, in direct communication, by the Caspian Sea and by Batoum, with the heart of the Russian Empire.

The moral effect of the conquest of Armenia and the annexation of Ghilan and Mazanderan by Russia upon our Mahommedan subjects, and upon the populations of Central Asia, cannot be overlooked by a statesman who attaches any value to the retention of India as part of the British Empire.

It would be out of place to enter at length in this despatch upon the arguments in support of what has been above stated.

The great calamities which the prolongation of the war may entail upon the various populations of this country, Mussulman and non-Mussulman, and the vast importance to the interests of humanity in bringing it to a speedy end, may be briefly mentioned. It is scarcely necessary to refer to the terrible loss of life and desolation which such a war must occasion. If the slaughter of thousands and tens of thousands of "anti-human" and "unspeakable" Turks is to be justified, even those who profess to be the most humane of men may feel some pity for their innocent women and children, who will be left to perish in utter misery. But the Christians may suffer scarcely less than the Mahommedans; their homes will be rendered desolate; their lives and property will be sacrificed to Turkish fanaticism, or to the disorder and anarchy which the prolongation of the war will cause.

The Porte, believing the very existence of the Empire to be at stake, has already withdrawn from the provinces even the forces absolutely necessary for the maintenance of tranquillity and for personal security. From all sides come already complaints or fears of disorders. In a country infinitely more civilized than Turkey, such would probably be the case under similar circumstances. Any impartial man will be surprised that, as yet, there have been so few excesses committed.

The reports of our Consular Agents prove that the public peace has been maintained in a very remarkable manner. Such outrages as have occurred have been, for the most part, committed by Circassians, Kurds, and other wild tribes, over which, even in times of peace, the Turkish Government can exercise but small control. In Bulgaria and Roumelia in general, as Mr. Blunt's despatches show, the Mahommedan population are well disposed towards the Christians, and their attitude towards them is, for the present, friendly and peaceful.

I am informed that the transport of the new levies of many thousands of men from the remotest parts of the Empire to the armies in the field, has been effected with the greatest order. This fact has been confirmed to me by Englishmen and others connected with railways which have been used for conveying them.

In Constantinople, notwithstanding the alarm and panics which normally prevail in Galata and Pera, there is also for the present perfect quiet, and there is no reason, as far as I can judge, to anticipate any hostile movement or demonstration against the Christians.

Although the state of things in Turkey as regard the Christians is at this time such as I have described it, yet we must not count upon its lasting. Any serious reverses or disasters experienced by the Turkish army in Europe, and the advance of the Russians upon the capital, or a rising of any part of the Christian population, might be used to provoke an outburst amongst the Mussulmans, founded rather upon a feeling of despair than upon fanaticism, that might have the most fatal consequences.

The Emperor of Russia has declared to his people that this is a religious war, waged in the cause of the Orthodox faith and against its infidel enemies. If Mussulmans are once convinced that it is a crusade against them and their religion, they may, in their agony, turn upon the Christians, and frightful massacres may ensue. If I were to trust all the reports that reach me, some even from persons who are supposed to be trustworthy authorities, such a danger is already imminent. I do not believe that it is, but I cannot doubt that it might become so.

Another motive for desiring peace before Russia can completely crush Turkey, and dictate her own terms, is the repugnance unquestionably felt by the most enlightened and intelligent Christians of all denominations, to being placed under Russian rule or protection, or even under her predominant influence. I have given your Lordship evidence of this fact which I believe to be indisputable. It is shown by the encyclical of the Greek Patriarch, transmitted to your Lordship by

to-day's messenger. It is further confirmed by the remarkable statement of Dr. Washburne, whose impartiality cannot be doubted, and who is certainly no advocate of Turkish misrule, that of the many hundred Bulgarians who have received an American (equivalent to an English) education at Robert College, not one was implicated in the attempted insurrection in Bulgaria.

The English people cannot, perhaps, yet bear to hear the truth of the events of last year; but it is my duty to state it to your Lordship. The marvellous ability and the unscrupulousness shown by Russia and her agents in misleading public opinion in England and elsewhere has been amply rewarded. It will probably be long before that which is true can be separated from that which is false; when history does so, it will be too late. The Porte, with its usual indifference, stupidity, and pride, has taken no effective means to place its case fairly before Europe. It neither employs the press, nor competent agents for such purposes. Its appeals to the Powers, and the State papers that it issues to refute the charges against it are either so clumsily prepared, or so exaggerated in tone, that they are more calculated to injure its cause. A great portion of the English public are, probably, still under the impression that the statements upon which the denunciations of Mr. Gladstone and others against Turkey were originally founded, are true; the 60,000 Christians outraged and massacred; the cartloads of human heads; the crowd of women burnt in a barn; and other similar horrors. There are persons, and amongst them, I grieve to say, Englishmen who boast that they invented these stories, with the object of "writing down" Turkey, to which they were impelled by a well-known hand. People in England will scarcely believe that the most accurate and complete inquiries into the events of last year in Bulgaria now reduce the total number of deaths to about 3,500 souls, including the Turks who were, in the first instance, slain by the Christians. No impartial man can now deny that a rising of the Christians, which was intended by its authors to lead to a general massacre of the Mahommedans, was in contemplation, and that it was directed by Russian and Panslavist agents. The panic that it created amongst the Mahommedans was the cause of the frightful vengeance they took. The great mass of the Bulgarians did not join in the movement, but were, on the contrary, opposed to it, and took no part in it. The Porte, at the instance, it is confidently asserted, of General Ignatiew, dealt with the insurgents, and those whom they suspected of being their accomplices, in a foolish and barbarous manner. The agents it employed in putting down the incipient insurrection were, for the most part, ignorant, corrupt, and brutal men. The Turkish Government has justly been held responsible for their acts, especially as it has refused to punish with condign severity those who committed horrible outrages; and whether the number of the killed was 60,000 or 3,000, the guilt of the Porte is the same.

It must not, however, be assumed that the condition of the Bulgarians under the rule of the Sultan was as bad as the enemies of Turkey desire to make it appear. That the administration was vicious and corrupt, and that the Christians of all denominations were unjustly treated, and were not placed on that equality with their Mussulman fellow-subjects to which they have a right, are admitted facts. But, nevertheless, they had made great progress of late years in material prosperity, education, and wealth. Englishmen who have been engaged in works of charity amongst them, and who were certainly very far from having any prejudice in favour of the Turks when they first came out to Turkey, have told me that they have seen with surprise the condition of the Bulgarian villages, and the general comfort and prosperity of their inhabitants, and have learnt with equal surprise how little they had really to complain of before a secret agency excited the hopes and passions which brought about the lamentable events of last year.

The Christian populations of Turkey, or rather, it may perhaps be said, those who by their knowledge and intelligence are capable of representing them, are convinced that under the Turkish rule they have a far better chance of carrying out their national aspirations, of retaining their national faith, and developing their political freedom than under that of Russia. They believe that the pressure recently brought to bear upon the Porte by the European Powers, and the lesson which the Turkish Government has received, will contribute to these objects. They are encouraged by the unexpected success of a Turkish Parliament, in which they find that they can freely express their opinions and expose their grievances. They know that the unchecked success of Russia would at once lead to the destruction of this germ of future liberty and good government. I believe that they are right.

My Russian colleague at Madrid said to me when we parted, "Russia looks

upon the establishment of a Constitution and a Parliament by the Turkish Government as an insult and defiance to her. Their existence would alone furnish us with a sufficient reason to make war upon Turkey. We will never consent to be the only Power left in Europe without constitutional institutions, and as we are not yet prepared for them, we cannot, it is evident, allow Turkey to have them."

What I have ventured to write in this despatch is, I can assure your Lordship, founded upon no preconceived ideas with regard to this country, but upon the information that I have obtained in free and unrestrained conversation with men of all classes, conditions, and religions. Not a day has passed since I have been here that I have not seen many such persons. Some have come to me of their own accord; others, who may have believed that their views would not be palatable to me, and have kept away, I have invited to call upon me.

I believe that the considerations which I have ventured to place before your Lordship will be of considerable importance in the event of the mediation of Her Majesty's Government and other Powers being accepted by Turkey and Russia. I must apologize to your Lordship for stating them thus frankly. The vast and vital interests at stake in this war, and the confidence which Her Majesty's Government have placed in me, could alone justify me in doing so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Whilst writing this despatch I received, through your Lordship, Colonel Mansfield's telegram of the 26th instant, reporting the rumours of Russia's willingness to treat for peace. If they be well-founded, it is not improbable that some of the considerations that I have placed before your Lordship may have induced the Emperor to desire to bring the war to an end as soon as possible.

A. H. L.

No. 176.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 548.) *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE been urging upon the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha the importance of avoiding difficulties with foreign Powers by carrying out, with regard to their subjects and citizens, the law establishing the state of siege in Constantinople. I have suggested to them to send a Circular to the foreign Representatives, stating that foreigners should not be molested, and that their Treaty rights and privileges should be respected. I have instructed Mr. Sandison to impress my views very strongly upon Safvet Pasha whenever he may find an opportunity for doing so, and I have the honour to inclose copy of a report of his conversation this morning with his Excellency on the subject.

I may mention that the French Chargé d'Affaires and other foreign Representatives are very anxious that a protest should be addressed at once to the Porte against the application of the law declaring the state of siege to foreigners.

It would be prudent for the Porte to take measures to prevent such a protest, in which I do not think it necessary now to join. I shall wait for your Lordship's instructions before doing so. M. de Mouy informs me that the Duc Decazes is in communication with your Lordship upon the subject.

I may mention that as yet the Porte has not notified to the foreign Missions the establishment of the state of siege.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 176.

Mr. Sandison to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, May 30, 1877.

Sir,

SAFVET PASHA mentioned to me this morning what he had stated to the French Chargé d'Affaires yesterday in regard to the proclamation of the state of siege at Constantinople, which his Excellency again declared will not affect the rights and privileges enjoyed by the foreign subjects under the Capitulations.

In reply to my representations, under your Excellency's instructions, he then told me that neither the law nor the règlement connected with the state of siege were yet ready for promulgation; but that when they would be so the Porte will communicate to the foreign Missions its instructions to the military authorities respecting their mode of execution and application to the capital.

In the meantime, should there be occasion for any restrictive measures intended to apply to foreign subjects, under present circumstances, in the capital, this, his Excellency added, will form the subject of a separate communication to the Embassies and Legations in the form of an official note.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. SANDISON.

No. 177.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 549.) *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

My Lord,

MR. CONSUL MOORE having informed me by telegraph that considerable fears are felt at Jerusalem by the Europeans and Christians there in consequence of the alleged contemplated removal of the Turkish garrison, I at once made representations, as I had previously done, to Safvet Pasha on the subject. His Excellency informs me that in consequence of previous representations the Porte had sent orders that the existing garrison should remain at Jerusalem, and that the Porte would now repeat its instructions to that effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I have telegraphed Safvet Pasha's assurances to Mr. Moore.

No. 178.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 550.) *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Lordship No. 539 of this day's date, respecting the recent landing of Greek pirates near Dedo-Aghatch, Safvet Pasha has informed me, through Mr. Sandison, that he will lose no time in recommending that a man-of-war should be sent to cruize off that part of the coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 179.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 551.) *Therapia, May 30, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Odoni upon the state of the district of Gallipoli, which has been forwarded to me by Her Majesty's Consul-General at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 179.

Vice-Consul Odoni to Consul-General Fawcett.

Gallipoli, le 23 Mai, 1877.

Monsieur,

MON interprète, Bohor Aciriste, qui se trouvait dans un village du district de Kessan près de celui d'Enos, m'a informé que du 19 au 21 de ce mois, dans ce dernier

district plusieurs Circassiens ont tué un Chrétien au village d'Isarli, blessé deux autres Chrétiens au village de Cozarli et enlevé de six à huit chevaux.

Il m'informe, en même temps, que les Circassiens infestent le district de Kessan où ils enlèvent des chevaux et que les marchands de ce district n'osent plus sortir dans la crainte d'être dévalisés.

En présence de ces faits j'ai cru de devoir me rendre chez le Gouverneur Rechad Pacha pour le prier de prendre les mesures nécessaires pour mettre fin à un état de choses qui n'est pas du tout conforme aux exigences de la sureté publique. Rechad Pacha m'a répondu qu'effectivement les rapports que j'avais reçu étaient conformes à la vérité, et qu'il prenait toutes les mesures avec le peu de moyens dont il dispose pour faire arrêter les coupables et ramméner la tranquillité dans les deux districts sus-énoncés.

A Boutais et Yenikeui, villages à peu de distance de Gallipoli et dans le district de Charkeui, aussi les Circassiens ont volé des chevaux. Je suppose que ce sont les hommes d'Omer Aga dont est mention dans ma dépêche du 9 de ce mois, qui commettent ces vols pour se procurer les montures dont ils ont besoin.

Le village de Hoggia Tchesmé, où habite Omer Aga, a fourni environ 300 hommes à ce chef, qui a promis de former un corps de 3,000 cavaliers.

Je crois devoir noter que sur les chevaux volés le 99 pour cent appartient aux Chrétiens.

Les Mustafiz de Gallipoli devraient s'embarquer hier, mais le bateau Turc qui devait les prendre n'a pas touché à notre port. Ils s'embarqueront demain sur le bateau Turc venant de Salonique et allant à Constantinople. Il y en a ici 92. Ceux des villages du district de Asaïtos ont été s'embarquer directement aux Dardanelles.

L'esprit des populations continue à être calme ici et, grâce aux mesures prises par Réchad Pacha, nous jouissons d'une parfaite tranquillité. Ainsi que je l'ai déjà rapporté autrefois Rechad Pacha est un homme de bonne volonté mais les fonctionnaires et les Caïmacams placés sous ses ordres ne l'écoutent pas trop et lui il manque de cette énergie dont il aurait besoin pour faire marcher les affaires au gré de sa bonne volonté.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) ODONI.

Gallipoli, le 24 Mai, 1877.

Rechad Pacha m'informe que les assassins du Chrétien du village d'Isarki et ceux qui ont blessé les deux Chrétiens du village de Cosarli ont été arrêtés. Il m'informe aussi que sur huit chevaux volés à Enos, Erenkeui, et Isarki, les six ont été trouvés et rendus à leurs propriétaires. Il se plaint de ce que le Vice-Consul de Sa Majesté à Enos, M. Rossy, ait cru nécessaire, dit-il, de dénaturer les faits en les rapportant à M. Blunt, ce qui a provoqué un télégramme de son Excellence le Vali d'Andrinople pour lui demander compte des méfaits qui auraient été commis dans le district d'Enos et dans le rapport fait par M. Rossy est loin d'être conforme à celui fait par lui Moutasserif.

Je viens d'apprendre que, à Maronia, village du district de Ghimourdjina, à demie heure de distance de la mer, une bande de brigands arrivée par voie de la mer a enlevé le négociant Thomas, sujet Ottoman, et s'est nouvellement embarquée en emmenant son captive. Le Moutasserif de Gallipoli a immédiatement télégraphié à leurs Excellences les Valis de Rhodes et de Salonique, ainsi qu'aux Caïmacams du littoral de Sandjak de Gallipoli. On craint cependant que ces corsaires ne se réfugient dans quelque île de la Grèce.

(Signé) ODONI.

No. 180.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 552.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 30*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report addressed to Mr. Consul Blunt by the British Vice-Consul at Philippopolis concerning the intended resumption by the Turkish Government of the work of reconstruction in the destroyed villages.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 180.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopoli, May 22, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that Aho Effendi, the Armenian functionary appointed after Saadoullah Bey's departure, Acting-President of the Imperial Commission, has received orders from the Porte to proceed with the rebuilding of the houses in the burnt villages. For this purpose a sum of 500,000 piastres has been placed at his disposal, and a Commission, composed of three Mussulmans and three Christians, has been appointed. The work is to be put in hand at once, and Aho Effendi informs me that it is his intention to begin with the houses of the neediest families.

The number of such dwellings is about 2,000, and if the sum allotted for their reconstruction seems small, it must be remembered that the special facilities at the command of the Government enable it to do the work at a comparatively small cost.

I regret to say that the monthly stipend which the Porte announced its intention some time ago of bestowing on the priests of the destroyed village has not been paid. The failure to carry out this intention is the more to be regretted as it bears out the anticipations of those whose past experience has rendered incredulous as to Turkish promises.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. CALVERT.

No. 181.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 553.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 31*, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 514 of the 25th instant, on the subject of the grounds of complaint which Persia alleges herself to have against Turkey, I have the pleasure to announce to your Lordship that Salvet Pasha has informed me that the Sublime Porte will take into its serious and favourable consideration the question of Kerbela and other holy places frequented by Persians, as well as the other matters to which the Government of the Shah attaches importance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 182.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 554.)
My Lord, *Therapia, May 31*, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a *note-verbale* addressed to me by the Porte, contradicting the story of the decapitation of a Kutchi shepherd, referred to in Mr. Consul Green's despatch No. 32 of the 7th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 182.

Note Verbale.

Sublime Porte, le 30 Mai, 1877.

UN télégramme d'Ali Saib Pacha dément formellement le conte du berger de Kutchi. Il n'y a eu ni tête portée à Podgoritska, ni homme décapitée. Les informations du Prince Nicholas ne peuvent se rapporter qu'à la mort d'un Kutchiote survenue dans les circonstances suivantes :—

Par suite de la déclaration de la guerre par la Russie, les Monténégrins se sont livrés le 14 Avril (n.s.) à Piperi à des manifestations de joie publique. Les coups de canon à cette occasion ont attiré l'attention des nôtres qui ont été sur une monticule, près de Dinorka, pour voir ce qui se passent ; soudain une dizaine d'insurgés Kutchiotes

les ont assaillis de coups de fusil et en ont blessé un. Les nôtres ayant riposté, il s'en est suivi une fusillade qui a coûté la vie à un des aggresseurs, mais on n'a ni décapité le Kutchiote, ni, par conséquent, a-t-on porté sa tête à Podgoritza.

Une réponse a déjà été transmise dans ce sens à Cettigné par l'entremise de M. le Consul de Sa Majesté Britannique.

No. 183.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 555.)

Therapia, May 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a *note-verbale* from the Porte, informing me that the evacuation of the town of Soulina has been decided upon in consequence of the military operations on the Danube, of which the consequences cannot be foreseen. The Imperial Government cannot, therefore, abandon the measure, especially as they release the Ottoman authorities from all responsibility which might arise from danger to foreigners should the town be attacked.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 183.

Note-Verbale.

Sublime Porte, le 30 *Mai*, 1877.

LA Sublime Porte a pris connaissance de la lettre que le Caïmacam de Soulina a adressée à M. le Consul d'Angleterre relativement à l'évacuation de cette ville.

Cette mesure ayant été prise par suite des opérations militaires qui se poursuivent sur le Danube et dont on ne pourrait prévoir les conséquences, le Gouvernement Impérial ne saurait y revenir, d'autant plus qu'elle dégage les autorités Ottomanes de toute responsabilité pouvant résulter des dangers auxquels seraient exposés les sujets étrangers si la ville de Soulina venait à être attaquée.

No. 184.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 556.)

Therapia, May 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of the note addressed by my Austro-Hungarian colleague to the Porte with reference to the permission demanded by his Government for Austro-Hungarian vessels detained by the Turkish authorities on the Danube to ascend that river beyond the junction of the Timok.

In pursuance of the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 126 of the 17th instant, I have informed the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs that I am authorized to give my support to Count Zichy's representations, and to claim for British vessels the same privileges.

I spoke on this subject to Safvet Pasha on Monday last, and his Excellency made me the same proposal that he has made to Count Zichy, namely, that some guarantee should be given that the vessels in question were not destined for Russian use, and had not contraband of war on board.

This condition appeared to me just and reasonable. The examination at Ada Kalé, to which the Austro-Hungarian Government have agreed, will ensure its being carried out. I presume that Her Majesty's Government will agree to it.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 184.

Count Zichy to Safvet Pasha.

Le 31 *Mai*, 1877.

LA navigation sur le Danube entre Corsova et l'embouchure du Timok ayant été subitement interdite le 29 courant contrairement aux assurances que la Sublime Porte nous avait donné préalablement, le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal vient de m'en informer par le télégraphe, en signalant les graves préjudices qui résultent d'une pareille mesure tant pour les intérêts de notre commerce et de notre navigation en général que notamment pour ceux de la Compagnie privilégiée de la navigation à vapeur du Danube.

Aussi longtemps que la dite partie du fleuve ne sera pas comprise dans le rayon des hostilités, le Gouvernement Austro-Hongrois doit insister et insiste pour le principe de la liberté de navigation y soit appliqué et strictement observé.

Le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal est d'autant plus décidé à maintenir sa demande que de son côté tout commerce avec de la contrebande de guerre a été sévèrement défendu, et que les mesures nécessaires ont été prises pour assurer la stricte observation de cette défense. Aussi puis-je annoncer à votre Excellence que nous avons même concédé aux autorités Ottomanes d'Ada-Kalé le droit de visiter les navires pour se convaincre de l'efficacité de nos mesures et par ce procédé le Gouvernement Impérial et Royal est persuadé d'être allé jusqu'à l'extrême limite des garanties qui lui ont été demandé.

D'après les ordres que je viens de recevoir de la part de M. le Comte Andrassy, je suis chargé de notifier ce qui précède à votre Excellence, en lui demandant son intervention afin d'obtenir que des ordres précis soit expédiés sans retard par le télégraphe à qui de droit dans le but de rétablir immédiatement la liberté de navigation sur la dite [partie] du Danube.

Nous espérons donc que la Sublime Porte voudra bien se conformer à notre juste demande en insistant plus sur l'exécution de mesures que nous ne saurions respecter et qui, si elles étaient maintenus, seraient de nature à provoquer des conflits que nous voudrions éviter et qu'il ne serait certainement pas dans l'intérêt de la Sublime Porte de faire naître.

No. 185.

Vice-Consul Billiotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 23. Political.)

Trebizond, May 21, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE received reliable information on the subject of the Erzeroum road, which I hasten to communicate to your Lordship.

There are a few places where it has been destroyed by the floods; the first break of importance occurs after Ardassa (about 50 miles from this) where some 300 yards have been swept away completely, but a new road has been constructed round the small lake which still remains. Again, before coming to Gumushané the steep bank has given way, leaving only a margin of eighteen inches wide at some places, but another passage has been cut to turn this point. The road over the Kop Dag is at certain spots almost impracticable, owing to the melting snow; however, a sufficient number of oxen would pull a heavy gun through. On the whole, owing to numerous repairs which have been pushed on lately with energy, the road is practicable for artillery and waggons.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 186.

Vice-Consul Billiotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 9.)

(No. 24. Political.)

Trebizond, May 23, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a report which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador on the

subject of the difficulties encountered in the transport to Erzeroum of artillery and military stores.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 186.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Layard.

Trebizond, May 23, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that since his arrival here on the 14th instant, Djemil Pasha, who has for special mission to superintend the transport of troops, ordnance, and munitions to Erzeroum, has displayed the greatest possible energy.

I give hereafter a list of the expeditions in men and material which have taken place since his arrival, but I apprehend for him that, in spite of all his exertions, it will be impossible for him to overcome certain difficulties, which I consider to be insuperable.

The Mussulman and Christian populations lend now, as they have done hitherto, their services for the transport of the munitions and cannons; but the number of caravans is restricted; the oxen and horses used for drawing carts and guns are, in many cases, in so miserable a condition as to be unfit for the work they have to perform; there are no sufficient special carriages for the transport of the heavy pieces of artillery and their accessories, and a number of those that have been furnished by the Government are so rotten that some of the wheels break on their starting from Trebizond. I take the liberty to send a few pieces of a broken wheel, to enable your Excellency to judge by material evidence of the unfitness of the carriages.

Djemil Pasha, to encourage the population, lends himself a hand in pulling the guns; he changes or repairs the wheels, which present a strange appearance in size and construction, but only to see them break again shortly after.

It cannot be expected that, with similar means of transport, heavy ordnance can travel during three weeks, the time required for their reaching Erzeroum, without their sustaining irreparable damage. I hear that some pieces of artillery have already been abandoned on the road.

The populations of the villages are summoned on certain days at appointed spots, to help in dragging the heavy ordnance; they respond to the call in more than sufficient numbers, but the cannons, with their broken carriages, not coming forthwith at the time reckoned upon, the peasants, after waiting long enough, return to their villages, having rendered no service to their country, and having lost themselves several days of labour. It may happen that after a few similar useless calls the populations will no longer come forward to help the Government.

Now, as before, country boats are carrying munitions of Surmena, from whence they can be sent in a shorter time to Erzeroum; and horses and carts are requisitioned from all parts of the country.

In order to induce the Persian caravans to return to Trebizond, which several of them had lately refrained from doing to avoid being again loaded with Government stores at reduced prices, Djemil Pasha has made an arrangement, by which they will be loaded once by the Government and once by the merchants.

But the chances are that the authorities at Constantinople, who not only seem to have no idea of the difficulties encountered here, but do not provide also the indispensable material for the transport, will no more acknowledge Djemil Pasha's services than they have recognized the exertions of the Vali, Ahmed Kassim Pasha.

The latter has just been dismissed, under the accusation that he has not displayed sufficient activity in forwarding the Government stores to Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Départed for Erzeroum since 14th instant, 4,500 packages of military stores; 3,600 mouhadiz; 50 cannons of all calibre.

Djemil Pasha is assisted in his mission by Rushdi Effendi, Civil Commissioner, sent with him by the Porte.

No. 187.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 25. Political.

Trebizond, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relating to the fall of Ardahan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 187.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Layard.

Trebizond, May 25, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour to transmit to your Excellency on the 22nd instant the following telegram in cypher:—

"Official information. On 19th Sabri Pasha fled from Ardahan, almost without resisting, when only 150 killed. Troops, following his example, disbanded."

I hear from Turkish sources, which may therefore be considered as not exaggerating the disaster, that there were at Ardahan upwards of 120 cannons, 50,000 rifles, 20,000 cases of munitions, and provisions for six months, which have all fallen into the hands of the Russians. The Turkish forces at Ardahan are reckoned to have been from 10 to 12 battalions.

According to this same source of information, Ziya Ali Pasha, many officers, about 1,000 soldiers were killed, and 1,500 wounded, when Hussein Sabri Pasha fled with 600 men, with whom he is said to be now at Livanah, the remainder being taken prisoners. But the information which I have telegraphed that Sabri Pasha fled at the commencement of the action, and that the army, following his example, disbanded, is more credited among Turkish functionaries at Trebizond.

The news of this reverse has deeply impressed the Mussulman population in this province. In fact, by the fall of Ardahan, the numerous artillery and ammunitions which have remained in the hands of the Russians will be used against the Turks themselves, without reckoning that it secures an open road between the important fortress of Achizka and the army before Kars.

It is stated, moreover, by persons who know the country, that, although difficult, it is possible for troops to go straight from Ardahan, through Olti, to Erzeroum, and to come down to Baiboort by Tortoum and the valley of the Choorook Soo, thus cutting off all communications between Trebizond and Erzeroum.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 188.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 7. Political.)

Rustchuk, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith inclosed copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte respecting outrages committed in this vilayet.

I am, in accordance with your Lordship's instructions of the 27th March last, giving my attention to any acts of violence in my district that come to my knowledge, and shall not fail to investigate in person and report any that may occur of a grave character.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure in No. 188.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Rustchuk, May 22, 1877.

Sir,

ON the receipt of the Earl of Derby's Circular of the 27th March last, instructing me to be especially careful in investigating and reporting any acts of violence that might take place, and especially any outrages that might be perpetrated on the Christian inhabitants of this vilayet, I immediately caused it to be quickly made known amongst the Christians that I desired to be informed of any such occurrences.

One of the first that was brought to my knowledge was the one of the village of Domogila, reported to your Excelleney in my despatch of the 1st instant; and this was considered by some of my colleagues and others here to be of such gravity that, after seeing the priest and several of the chief Christians of the village, I saw it necessary to unofficially recommend the case to Sadyk Pasha's attention.

His Excellency received my recommendation apparently very favourably, even thanking me, and begging me to let him know of every case I heard of; he also at once sent off a Commission to the spot, which carried out its mission very impartially, and all went on well till just after Shevket Pasha had left this, when a sudden change came over the Pasha, and the case, which up to that moment had been all in favour of the Christians, took the opposite turn, and it was found out, to the surprise, of course, of every one that they (the Christians) were the guilty parties.

Having heard of the Pasha's anger at the removal of Shevket Pasha, which he attributed to me, and knowing that this had influenced him as to the case in question, I, nevertheless, did my duty, and again communicated with him privately on the subject. His Excellency replied that the case was in the hands of the Tribunal, and that he could not interfere. There was then a lull in the investigation of the case, and matters stood thus till the departure of the Pasha on Saturday last, the 19th instant.

I have this day been informed that the case was the day before yesterday taken up again, and that it is again going in favour of the Christains.

The outrage in question took place on the night of the 14th April, and we have now the 22nd of May. This case, which might and could have been disposed of in a few days, has already consumed nearly six weeks.

In the meantime a number of other outrages, accompanied by violent assault and robbery, and in some cases by murder, have occurred; but, from fear of doing more injury to the victims, I have been afraid of doing more than taking their statements and recommending them to petition the Pasha. I have, however, not heard of anything having been done by the authorities in any single case.

I have done my utmost to assist the victims of these outrages, and if I have not been able to do more, the fault lies with Sadyk Pasha; but as he is now no longer here, I shall again do my best in carrying out the instructions of the Secretary of State.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

No. 189.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 17. Political.)

Adrianople, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Calvert relative to the passage of the new Bulgarian Exarch through Philippopolis, and to the distinguished reception accorded to his Holiness by the Ottoman authorities at that place.

During his short stay in this town the Exarch was likewise welcomed in a very flattering and cordial manner by the Governor-General Ali Pasha, and the same marks of honour and respect were paid his Holiness as are customarily accorded to high Turkish dignitaries of State.

I called on the Exarch and had the satisfaction to hear from him that he found perfect tranquillity to prevail throughout the Sandjak of Philippopolis, the authorities doing their best to maintain this satisfactory state of things.

In the course of our conversation his Holiness referred to last year's unfortunate occurrences in that sandjak, and attributed them entirely to foreign agency. He said, "J'ai la ferme conviction, M. le Consul, que ma nation n'a rien à gagner par la violence; et que ce n'est que par la tranquillité et en restant fidèle à notre Souverain qu'elle pourra améliorer son sort."

The Exarch expressed himself as decidedly in favour of an extension of military service to the non-Mussulman population, that being, in his opinion, the best means of establishing perfect equality between the different communities in the Ottoman Empire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 189.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir,

Philippopolis, May 25, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to report that the new Bulgarian Exarch, late Archbishop of Lofitcha, who arrived here on Tuesday evening and left this morning on his way to Constantinople, was received here by the Turkish authorities with the highest honours.

The Bulgarians of Philippopolis had deemed it expedient, to avoid giving offence to the fanatical section of the Mussulman community, to make the demonstration of welcome to the Exarch as modest as possible; but the behaviour of the Turkish authorities turned his reception into quite a triumphal ceremony.

The Governor, with a guard of honour of thirty cavalry, proceeded half a mile out of the town to meet his Holiness, and welcomed him with great respect and cordiality. The Bulgarian population, encouraged by this mark of honour towards their supreme spiritual head, turned out in crowds to receive him, and on his way through the town flowers were strewn in his path and showered on him from the windows.

On receiving the heads of the Bulgarian community the new Exarch delivered a brief address, in which he warmly counselled them to remain loyal to the Sultan, from whom alone they had any favours to expect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. B. J. CALVERT.

No. 190.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 40. Political.)

Salonica, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, referring to the case of the man who was burnt at Monastir, and some other crimes and disorders reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Suter at Larissa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 190.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir,

Salonica, May 28, 1877.

IN the despatch which I had the honour to address to your Excellency on the 26th instant, I mentioned the report that a Christian had been burnt alive at Monastir; I have applied to his Excellency the Vali here, who telegraphed immediately to the Governor at Monastir, and received for answer that it is true, that a Christian conducting an animal loaded with petroleum had been met by a body of Turks, who robbed him and burnt him. His Excellency declares he will insist on the closest scrutiny in this matter.

Inclosed I have the honour to transmit copy of Mr. Vice-Consul Suter's report, dated 25th May 1877. I receive almost daily from the Vice-Consuls placed under this Consulate reports of outrages, which it is my disagreeable office to transmit and the invidious one of communicating to the local authority, knowing at the same time the difficulty they meet in repressing disorders with insufficient police force.

Mr. John Bizzo, first dragoman of this Consulate, reports that a Greek merchant of Georgia having been murdered near Salonica about two months ago, his brother arrived from Georgia to receive the papers found on his body. On his return he and those with him were murdered at Yenidjeh, near Karajiova; and that two days ago, in the village of Soho, distant about six hours from Salonica, two persons were missed, and after a few days their bodies were found a short distance from a shed which serves as a shelter for the police.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 190.

Vice-Consul Suter to Acting-Consul Barker.

Volo, May 25, 1877.

Sir,

I REGRET to have to report to you some cases of crime and disorder which, unfortunately of late, seem to be on the increase in Thessaly.

The inclosed are notes of acts of both, committed in various parts of the country, chiefly by the "Hoodoodeeyeh," or frontier-guards, and in the border villages, which I have obtained from what I believe to be reliable sources; and I lament to say that such have recently been of occasional occurrence, even in the vicinity of Larissa.

Last week a Jew pedlar, having a horseload of wares, and accompanied by a Christian carrier, the owner of the hired cattle, in returning, just after night-fall, from a fair, were waylaid near the "Tricala-Capissi" by two armed men, who demanded their money. They having none, the assailants attacked the Jew and his companion with their arms, and after inflicting wounds, from which it is doubtful either can survive, carried off the horse and its load. The "Tricala-Capissa" is one of the principal Larissa gates. Two nights later a party of builders, who had worked through the winter at "Armyro," and who, as is customary towards approach of harvest time, were on their way home with their earnings, had camped near a village about an hour's distance from that town. Before midnight these men, seven in number, and having no arms whatever, were attacked by a negro and three other armed Turks, who besides robbing them of all the money they possessed, and not content with maltreating them all, used their arms, cutting off the hand of one man and wounding another so severely that both it is feared will die from the injuries received.

These outrages have created some excitement, and, among the timid, even needless alarm, and no doubt they will be magnified and availed of for purposes which, under present circumstances, it is to be expected agitators will have in view.

I took occasion, before I left Larissa, two days ago to point this out to the Mutessarif of Thessaly to urge the expediency of measures to punish the delinquents, to prevent recurrence of excesses, and to ensure the maintenance of good order and of public confidence. He assured me these objects have his first and most serious care, and I believe it to be sincere and that it will be effective.

I have learnt to-day that three of the authors of the last-mentioned of the outrages above referred to have been arrested at Larissa. The fourth and chief actor, the negro, is still at large, but being well-known as an evil-doer cannot long remain so.

Abdi Pasha, who I stated in a former report was expected here from Monastir, went thence instead to Yanina. It is said he will arrive at Larissa early next week, and is to proceed on an inspection of the troops along the frontier. The hope is expressed that this may operate improvement in the condition of the "Hoodoodeeyehs," who complain that they have been forced into their desertions, brigandage, and misconduct, by being deprived of pay for nearly two years past, and lately even of the ration of bread formerly issued to them.

Her Majesty's ship "Pallas" arrived here yesterday afternoon from Salonica, and purposes to leave again to-morrow to return thither. I am told that her presence has had a re-assuring effect at Volo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HY. SUTER.

Inclosure 3 in No. 190.

Notes.

IN the village of Vlatzi, in the neighbourhood of Petrilia, in Agrapha, some Hoodoods, or frontier guards, entered the monastery, killed the monk Calinico, and a nun, an old woman; they carried off 200 liras, all the silver ornaments of the church, and destroyed the pictures.

In the village of Kerusia, the same Hoodoods took a prisoner in order to get a ransom; they dressed him in Hoodood's clothes that he might not be recognized when they went through the village, and threatened him with instant death if he dared to speak; he, however, managed to make his escape.

In the village Florisseus the Hoodoods caught a priest, as he was coming out of church, and carried him off. A patrol was sent out in pursuit, with express orders not to fire on, but capture the party, and they succeeded in rescuing the priest.

In the village of Cappa some Hoodoods went to buy bread and get lodgings; not being satisfied with the latter they proceeded to insult the villagers, and then took them bound to their Colonel, who was at Phunar, and demanded permission to shoot them; this was, however, refused, permission being only given to capture.

In the village of Cunallia, some of these Hoodoods twice attempted to force an entrance into the houses of Evangelli Tchitchuri and Athanasius Christoula; they were, however, repulsed, and one Hoodood was wounded.

A man by the name of Evangelli Catchurus has been carried off by a Hoodood Chaoush, and still remains captive in his hands.

In the village of Tikeli some Hoodoods in disguise captured the Gotcha-bashi; took him into a house, where they massacred him.

A priest Pappa Demitri, who lives in a village near Ellassona, was going to his bishop on some business when he was met by the Mustafiz, who were on their way to Larissa; they beat him very cruelly, tore his cap, and took 40 piastres from him. When at last he was released, he went to the bishop, who reported the case to the Kaimakam of Ellassona, but the only redress he obtained was a new cap and 40 piastres in place of those stolen.

Larissa, May 23, 1877.

No. 191.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 41. Political.)

My Lord, *Salonica, May 29, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith inclosed copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, on the subject of the great efforts which are being made by the local authorities here to send every available man and horseman to the war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 191.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, May 29, 1877.*

THE Vali, Dervish Pasha, has received a telegram from the Porte, to ask what number exactly of condemned criminals in the prisons of the Vilayet of Salonica and its dependencies are capable of being drafted into the army.

On the 22nd instant a muster-roll of 340 has been prepared; but as the prison lists of Serres, Drama, and Monastir have not yet been received, it is supposed that 1,500 will be found fit for service. Every effort is being made to procure money for the equipment of the Mustahfiz, who were at first 1,600 here, but by medical certificates and by numerous desertions have been reduced to 700.

The mounted police, from 110, have been reduced to 35 by the late selections made from them, and the zaptiehs on foot, from 300, have been reduced to 180.

It is of urgent necessity that these mounted police and zaptiehs on foot should be replaced by others before the departure of the new levies. The Vali, to all remonstrances, replies that the Mustahfiz who remain will do their work, but these last are in reality only the infirm unfit for service.

To-day a notice was put up in several parts of the city ordering a levée of 2,000 horsemen, to be voluntarily enrolled, with horses and clothes furnished by the townspeople, but arms by the Government.

An appeal is made to the patriotism of all Mussulman and non-Mussulman inhabitants to enrol themselves in five days from the date of the notice. But it goes on to say, "that should the Government find the population slack in responding to this call to defend the country threatened, such as are known to have good horses, and be judged by the Council fit for service, will be enrolled by force and compelled to serve, and this the local authority hopes it will not be compelled to do."

I hear from Prevesa from Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney that the Italian Consular Agency has been raised to a Vice-Consulate, and a M. Corti has arrived from Monte Video to fill the post.

The exportation of grain has been prohibited with a delay of fifteen days for the execution of contracts. Grain abounds here and the harvests look well.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. B. B. BARKER.

No. 192.

Acting Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 2. Political.)
Smyrna, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, translation of a letter which I have lately received from Mr. Clado, the British Consular Agent at Avar, a town of 20,000 inhabitants, eleven hours' distant from this place, relative to certain outrages which have occurred at Kinik, a village situated thirteen hours' from Smyrna.

Mr. Clado likewise reports that at Avar a certain Deli Hussein proposed to erect a Bairak, or standard, for the purpose of enlisting soldiers for the war, and demanded from the Governor 200 Turkish liras, which the latter refused to pay, consequently Deli Hussein took to the mountains, in company with some of his followers, and threatened to take revenge on the inhabitants. They waylaid two Jews, who were stripped of everything they had, and were subjected to great maltreatment; and also caught a Greek youth, of whom they required a ransom of 100 Turkish liras, and he was only set free by the intervention of his friends on the payment of a small sum. Owing to these outrages a great panic prevailed amongst the Christians, seeing that the authorities were not able to maintain order.

To all these circumstances I did not fail, my Lord, to call the attention of his Excellency the Governor-General, Sabri Pasha, who, I am pleased to say, took immediate measures to have the offenders arrested and brought to justice.

Mr. Vice-Consul Marato, of Aivali, also reports to me, that at a village called Yaykioi, 24 hours' from the town, a Greek church had been plundered and profaned, and that this act is attributed to the fanaticism of the Mussulmans, but that the offenders have not been discovered.

I have requested Mr. Marato to ascertain, if possible, who were the actual guilty parties, and to furnish me with particulars.

Since the calling out of the Mustafiz, about 10,000 have arrived at Smyrna, besides Turkish and Circassian volunteers, so that we have now here upwards of 12,000 men, who are waiting for transports to convey them to Constantinople.

I am happy to say, that notwithstanding the presence of these men, the peace of the town has thus far in no instance been disturbed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure in No. 192.

Consular Agent Clado to Acting Consul Joly.

(Literal Translation.)
Sir,

IN conformity with your instructions of the 30th May last I have the honour to communicate to you the incidents that have taken place at the village of Kinik, a Mudirlik under the jurisdiction of the Caimacamlik of Pergamus.

The truth of these incidents has been vouched to me by the Greek Vice-Consul of Magnesia, who had been lately to the above-mentioned village, and who was presented by the Christian community with a petition, legalized by the Primates, to this effect—

1. Some Mussulmans of the village entered by force into the Turkish bath reserved for women, and attempted to drive out, in a state of undity, those who were bathing at the time. This unheard-of outrage produced a great sensation among the members of the Christian community.

2. The Mussulman Gazandji Abdullah, without any cause, wounded the Christian Haggi Lambrin with a knife in the bazaars; and, what is still more to be regretted, this act of violence was committed in the very presence of the Mudir and Cadi, who not only kept from interfering, but did not even punish the offender.

3. Ibrahim, the son of Hodja Mehmet, also wounded the Christian Evangeli with a knife, and attempted to shoot with a pistol a shoemaker named Dimitri. This same Mussulman walked through the bazaar without the authorities arresting him, taking from the shops what he could lay hands on, and, when opposed by any one, menaced him with the pistol he held.

4. Another Mussulman, Cozloglu Ahmet, fired with a pistol at Tryphon, a Christian, who now lies dangerously wounded.

5. Ali, the son of Sighirtmass Arap, with Tzakir Ahmet, pursued the Christians of the village.

6. Halil, the son of Alalzoglu Mehmet, with the assistance of his negro servant, broke open the door of a Christian baker's shop. This man is seriously wounded, and is confined to his bed since. The same Mussulman stabbed the Armenian Zadi Oglu, whose life is now in danger.

7. On the 25th April last the son of Devedji Osman, with others, attempted to violate a young Christian girl working in the fields not far from the village, and, on her resisting, fired on her and broke her left arm. The Greek Vice-Consul had her sent to the hospital at Pergamus, but her life is still in danger.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CLADO.

P.S.—Perfect tranquillity reigns here. The Mustafis left Axar in perfect order. Two bands of volunteers are being formed, one composed of Mussulmans, the other of Greeks. Up to now they behave well, and have not molested any one. Our Caimacam shows great activity in preserving order at Axar, and everyone is consequently satisfied with him.

C.

No. 193.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 94. Confidential.)
My Lord,
Athens, May 31, 1877.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 89, Confidential, of the 26th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith, an extract from a private letter which I received this morning from Mr. Consul Binney of Syra, reporting that 6,000 muskets and 1,000 barrels of gunpowder had been brought there by the steamer "Spartan," and describing the present state of feeling in the island.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

Inclosure in No. 193.

Consul Binney to Mr. Stuart.

Syra, May 29, 1877.

(Extract.)

THE "Spartan" (steam-ship) arrived to-day bringing 6,000 muskets and 1,000 barrels of gunpowder. The arms are consigned to the Pistoliki Bank, and the powder to Messrs. C. Klochc and Co., the agents of the steamer.

People here are beginning to take a rather gloomy view of the future, fearing that the Government will not be able to hold the nation in check, should the Turks suffer any important reverses on the Danube. The well-to-do classes strongly urge the necessity of Syra taking no part in the agitation of the day, but there are certain individuals who advise a different course, and I suspect the "Syllogos," which has been formed here, is nothing else than a veil to cover the schemes of a secret Committee.

No. 194.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 473. Very Confidential.)

Paris, June 7, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me this afternoon that he had received an important despatch from General Leflô, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, respecting the views of the Russian Government with regard to peace, and that he should send this evening instructions to the Marquis d'Harcourt to speak confidentially to your Lordship on the subject.

The Duke went on to say that in fact General Leflô reported that Prince Gortchakow had assured him that the Emperor of Russia had no desire whatever that his army should cross the Balkans; but that, on the contrary, so soon as the Danube had been crossed, and the Russian arms had achieved a decided and unmistakable success on the other side, His Majesty would receive with satisfaction overtures from the Guaranteeing Powers to use their good offices for arranging terms of peace.

Prince Gortchakow had, the Duc Decazes proceeded to tell me, suggested that the initiative in proposing to the other Powers to make overtures of the kind might very properly be taken by France. The Duke himself did not, however, concur in this suggestion. He thought, on the contrary, that it was from Germany that the first proposal would come with the best effect; and he conceived that Her Majesty's Government might very well intimate this to the German Government. If, however, this plan should not be deemed feasible, the Duke was of opinion that a proposal might be made by Her Majesty's Government simultaneously to all the Guaranteeing Powers to unite in offering their good offices to the belligerents.

For his own part, the Duke said, he should heartily welcome such a proposal, and on its being made should at once assume that it would be equally acceptable to the other Governments.

Speaking, however, very confidentially, he would not conceal from your Lordship or from me that he had reason to fear that Austria was far from wishing that the war between Russia and Turkey should be brought to an immediate close. He had (he said) obtained this morning absolute certainty that on the breaking out of the war a Convention, Protocol, or diplomatic document of some kind had been signed by Count Andrassy with M. de Novikow, the Russian Ambassador at Vienna. Now this document contained a stipulation that neither Russia nor Austria should occupy any part of Servia; but that if the war went on to such lengths as to make a re-distribution of territory feasible, Austria should take possession first of Turkish Croatia and subsequently of the whole of Bosnia. The Duc Decazes was afraid that the Austrian Government now held so much to these acquisitions that it would oppose a peace made so early as to preclude their being effected.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 195.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 474. Very Confidential.)

Paris, June 7, 1877.

My Lord,

MY immediately preceding despatch No. 473 of this date, and the telegram of which it is a paraphrase, contain the most important part of what the Duc Decazes said to me yesterday about the prospects of peace; and full particulars will no doubt be given to your Lordship by the Marquis d'Harcourt on his receiving the instruction which was about to be sent to him. Nevertheless, it may be worth while to record here some further details of my conversation with the Duke.

His Excellency seemed to think that the Russian terms of peace would be—

1. The cession to Russia of Batoum, Kars, and Bayazid, in Asia.

2. The restoration to her of the part of Bessarabia of which she was deprived by the Treaty of Paris.

3. The opening of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to her fleet.

On the other hand, the Duke had, he told me, heard that Count Andrassy had talked of the following as probable results of the war:—

The independence of Roumania and Servia.

The autonomy of Bulgaria.

An increase of the territory of Montenegro.

The annexation of Thessaly and Epirus to Greece.

The opening of the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus to the ships of war of all nations.

With regard to the written engagement between Russia and Austria, the Duc Decazes said that he had all along felt sure that there was a definite and complete understanding between the two Powers, but that it was only this morning that he had received positive information of the fact. He remarked that the desire to acquire territory explained a great deal which would otherwise be unaccountable in the policy of Austria since the outbreak of the insurrection in Herzegovina.

I asked the Duke whether the document in question did not contain any stipulations as to advantages to be obtained by Russia, in consideration of the acquisitions of territory accorded to Austria. His Excellency said that he could not give me a positive answer, but that he supposed the engagement of Austria not to intervene against her in the war was regarded by Russia as an equivalent.

The Duke told me that he knew that the Austrian Government were very angry with Italy, and resented bitterly the endeavours made by that Power to thwart their designs on the east coast of the Adriatic, and the jealous watch kept on all their proceedings by Italian agents.

He said that Russia had applied to the Austrian Government for leave to station her fleet at Cattaro, and that the Austrian Government had refused, alleging Italian jealousy as one of its reasons for doing so.

He mentioned that while Austria most strongly objected to the establishment of the neutrality of Roumania under the guarantee of the Powers, she was favourable to that country being declared wholly independent.

Finally, the Duc Decazes observed that, for his own part, he regarded the opening of the Dardanelles as the only very delicate and difficult question.

The danger of which he expressed most apprehension was a possible union of the Russian, German, and Italian fleets against France. He seemed to consider that such a union would be menacing to England also, unless she and France agreed to stand by one another.

The Duke avowed that in his opinion the opening of the Straits would be a danger to France, and he dwelt much on the importance of England and France acting together to protect themselves from the perils to which he thought it would expose them both. But he did not make any offer to unite with England in endeavouring to maintain the present Treaty stipulations on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 196.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 475. Secret.)

Paris, June 7, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes has dwelt much of late on the danger to which France and England would be exposed if the Dardanelles were opened to the Russian fleets; and the night before last he mentioned to me very confidentially a plan which he had formed for counteracting this danger.

It appeared that his plan was that England and France should establish a joint British and French Protectorate over Egypt and Syria, and should include in it, as advanced posts, Crete and Cyprus.

I did not feel justified in giving any encouragement to this plan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 197.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 476. Secret.)

Paris, June 7, 1877.

My Lord,

THE urgency of the Duc Decazes in speaking of the question of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles as the only difficult and critical question in prospect, and in representing the opening of these straits as an inevitable result of the war, made me suppose that he must be leading up to some proposal to Her Majesty's Government, and in fact, on the night before last, as I have already informed your Lordship, he suggested to me in strict confidence that, in order to guard against the danger to which English and French interests would be exposed, the two countries should form an alliance in order to establish a French and English Protectorate over Syria and Egypt, comprising Candia and Rhodes as advanced posts. He urged that the Russian fleet would never venture to sally forth from the Dardanelles to attack such a position as this plan would give to France and England; that, at all events, the united fleets of France and England would be more than a match for those of all the rest of the world; and that the communication between the Mediterranean and India would be perfectly secure, so long as Egypt and Syria were under the control of the two great Western Powers.

The Duke added that he had at first thought that Holland, to whom communication with her eastern possessions was extremely important, might be included in the alliance, but that on reflection he had thought that she might be exposed to dangers by joining England and France in the proposed Protectorate which would be out of proportion to any addition of strength which she could bring to them.

I listened attentively to what the Duc Decazes said, but, as I have already had the honour to report to your Lordship, I did not feel justified in giving any encouragement to his plan.

In fact, it seemed to me to be open to many obvious objections.

In the first place, it is difficult not to suspect that it has been prompted as much by jealousy of England as by jealousy of Russia; or, in other words, that one of the main objects of it is to prevent England taking steps to place her means of communication with India under her own exclusive control, while the momentary eclipse of French power makes it easy for her to do so.

Secondly, it may be doubted whether the execution of the plan would not tend to place the control of the communications in the hands of France rather than of England. The Protectorate could hardly be established and maintained by naval forces exclusively; and if troops were to be used on shore, the Power which could supply the larger contingent would be apt to exercise the greater influence.

A third objection, and it is one to which I myself attach the greatest importance, is that an attempt to exercise this kind of protectorate in common could hardly fail to lead to a quarrel between the two countries.

The interests of France in keeping open the communication with the East are very small in comparison with those of England; they would be sacrificed at once to objects which France has near at heart in Europe. They would weigh as nothing in

the balance if any other Power held out a hope of assisting France to recover Alsace and Lorraine. For this reason an alliance with France for the purpose of withstanding Russian encroachments in the East is no longer to be depended upon.

As France recovers her strength, her old desire for predominance in Egypt will revive. With regard to this matter I venture to refer your Lordship to my Secret despatch No. 365 of the 8th instant. The plan of a joint Protectorate might serve to bridge over for France the interval between her present state of convalescence and her complete recovery; but unless the position of England in Egypt be established now on a footing too firm to be shaken, it will be rash to expect that when France has recovered her strength she will fail to assert her old pretentions to be paramount in the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 198.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 147.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Secret.)

Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 5·30 P.M.

SULTAN is anxious to send an Envoy or Agent to the Ruler of Affghanistan. He wishes to know whether Her Majesty's Government would object. His Majesty says that, so far from such a mission being opposed to English interests, the Envoy would do all in his power to promote them. The person chosen for this mission would probably be Suleiman Effendi, a native of Bokhara, who has already been employed by the Porte in Central Asia, and who is, I believe, known to our Indian authorities. The suggestion as to the appointment of a Consul, referred to in my telegram of this morning, came from Grand Vizier. (Telegraphed to India.)

No. 199.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 148.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 5·35 P.M.

BULGARIAN Deputy sent to inquire into state of affairs in the Dobrutscha has returned, and describes the condition of that province as very bad—the Circassians and Tartars plundering and committing outrages in all directions, even upon German colonists. Porte has promised to recall present Governor and to take energetic measures to restore order. I am strongly urging them to do so.

No. 200.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 149.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 5·45 P.M.

I AM informed that Chamber will authorize the Government to raise a forced loan of about 4,000,000*l.*

No. 201.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 9.)

(No. 150.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 6·5 P.M.

I AM informed officially by Turkish Government that torpedos having been placed in the Bay of Suda, in Crete, the entrance to it at night has been prohibited to all vessels of war and commerce. No guns must be fired by vessels on their arrival at night. A Turkish man-of-war is on guard at the entrance.

No. 202.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 151.) *Constantinople, June 8, 1877, 6 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING to Lennox:—

"(Secret.)

"The Porte will not allow any more telegrams to be sent in cypher. Commander-in-chief will be directed to make an exception in your favour, but this must be done very secretly, so that others may not insist upon the same privilege.

"You had better come to an understanding on the subject with him and the military authorities where you are."

No. 203.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 152.) *Constantinople, June 8, 1877, noon.*
(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from General Kemball, dated 6th instant:—

"*Tchakerli*, 12 P.M.

"Arrived here Sunday by cross roads from Pennek, after meeting troops from Olti retiring on Chorouk Sou. Moukhtar Pasha has fallen back behind formidable position, fourteen miles from here, where he is entrenching himself to cover all roads from the passes of the Soghanli Dagh, converging on Kenpriköi. Two battalions have come from Hinis. Nine battalions are to-day reported to be retiring from Mollah Suloiman and Toprak Kalé to Delibaba, and five battalions from Delibaba to a village three miles from here. Russian reconnaissance has been pushed to Olti and to Toprak Kalé."

No. 204.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 153.) *Constantinople, June 9, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

FOLLOWING from Sir A. Kemball, Erzeroum:—

"*Chorouk Su, Wednesday evening.*

"Visited Moukhtar Pasha to-day.

"Kars closely invested by 60,000 men. Grand Duke has come to witness proposed attack in force. Concentrated fire of sixty guns, followed by continued assaults, as at Ardahan, without reference to sacrifice of life. Moukhtar Pasha says he cannot relieve Kars or create a diversion, owing to want of transport and provisions. It is clear to me, for the same reason, and for want of cavalry, he intends to retire all his forces to Erzinghan, in advance of Russians. He says that he will have time to construct requisite defensive works absolutely necessary. Meanwhile, he has detached three battalions and 500 Circassians, to act with four battalions coming from Erzinghan against the Russian forces at Olti, said to consist only of three battalions of infantry and 1,000 Cossacks. Enemy's side has eighteen mountain guns."

No. 205.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 154.) *Constantinople, June 9, 1877, 11·50, P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 5th instant, I have received positive assurances from Minister of Marine that the positions where torpedoes have been placed in the Danube have been carefully marked so that they may be removed when no longer required.

No. 206.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

(No. 155.) *Constantinople, June 9, 1877, 2·30 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

I HEAR from, I believe, a trustworthy source, that the person referred to in my despatch No. 557 of the 31st ultimo, has a letter from the Sultan of Turkey to the Emperor of Morocco, and some presents of arms for His Majesty, and that six female slaves were sent, who left this some time before the bearer of the letter. He has just telegraphed that he has been received with much honour; that the Emperor sent 100 horsemen to meet him, and that he is confident of the success of his mission."

No. 207.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 9.*)

Vienna, June 9, 1877.
(Telegraphic.)

THE Turks are reported to-day at the Foreign Office to have carried a position at the entrance of the Douga Pass. As, however, the Montenegrins still occupy the Pass more fighting is expected.

The expeditions from Scutari and against Grahovo appear to have been unsuccessful.

No. 208.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 228. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, June 9, 1877.*

My Lord,

I INFORMED your Excellency in my despatch No. 226, Confidential, of yesterday's date, of the proposal made by the Russian Ambassador for an exchange of ideas as to the possible terms of peace between Russia and Turkey.

Having obtained my consent to the conditions on which that proposal was made, Count Schouvaloff went on to relate to me the substance of the instructions which he had received on this subject.

As the communication was important and of considerable length, his Excellency promised to furnish me with a written statement of what had passed, and he has accordingly placed in my hands this afternoon a confidential Memorandum, of which I inclose a copy for your Excellency's information.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 209.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 37. Political.) *Foreign Office, June 9, 1877.*

Sir,

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a note addressed by M. Calimaki Catargi to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris,† stating that the Roumanian Government had prohibited navigation on the Danube, and declared that it would not be responsible for any losses occasioned thereby.

I have considered this notification in communication with the Law Officers of the Crown, and have now to state to you, for your information, that, assuming that the Roumanian Government is a belligerent, Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that it is justified in taking the measures which its Agent in Paris informs Lord Lyons have been adopted relative to the navigation of neutral vessels on the Lower Danube.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* No. 130. † No. .

No. 210.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 25. Political.)

Canea, Crete, May 25, 1877.

My Lord,

YESTERDAY being the anniversary of the Queen's birthday, the auspicious occasion was celebrated by me in the usual manner. Besides the visits of congratulation paid by the Governor-General, by my colleagues, and by some of the notable inhabitants of the town, the Christian Deputies of the General Assembly also came in a body to pay me their respects. I had heard the previous day that such was their intention, and, fearing that so marked a demonstration might give umbrage to the authorities, I intimated to my expected visitors, in order to avoid any misconstruction of their act, that they would do better to remain away. They were not, however, to be balked of their design, and with difficulty I induced them to consent to choose a few of their number to represent the rest. I was therefore not a little surprised the next morning to find the whole number of forty-two (with two or three exceptions) present themselves at my door, and I learnt afterwards that they were all so bent on personally testifying their respect for England and the august lady, the anniversary of whose birthday was being celebrated, that nothing would satisfy them but the attendance of the entire body. Their spokesman begged me, in the name of his colleagues, to accept their presence as a tribute of the devotion and respect entertained by the Cretan Christians towards a Power the prosperity and fame of which furnished the most striking proof of the happy results attending the impartial administration of equal laws without respect to race or creed. Their evident intention was to contrast this desirable state of things with the opposite result produced in their own country by a different system of government. I did not neglect to remind the Deputies that their island suffered less from the evils of the present war than perhaps any other part of the Empire, seeing that it was subjected neither to the conscription nor to the tax in lieu thereof, and I begged them to continue to urge whatever demands they had to make of the Government by peaceable and legal methods only, and so to avoid the evils which inevitably attend on war. They listened attentively to my advice, which, however, elicited but a faint echo of approval, and then took their leave. When the Governor-General called upon me later in the day I referred to this visit of the Deputies, which I assured him was purely spontaneous. His Excellency remarked that of course they were at liberty to pay their respects to the Representative of a friendly Power, and he had the politeness to add that, for his part, he was glad that they had done so; to which I rejoined that had the Mussulman Deputies thought to have come also, they would have been equally well received.

This incident I regard as another proof of the desire felt by the Christian Islanders for bringing about a political union with Great Britain.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 211.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 26. Political.)

Canea, Crete, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

WHILE the Christian inhabitants of the island are in a state of expectancy, and awaiting the answer to be given by the Porte to their demands for a liberal modification of the Organic Law, the authorities, instead of avoiding any measures which might furnish a pretext for their discontent, appear quite careless as to how they provoke it. An instance of this spirit has just occurred in the imprisonment of six dyers for the non-payment of a tax of 18s. a-month for the right of carrying on their trade. There is no mention of this tax in the Organic Law, but it is supposed to be included with a few others in the vague phrase which occurs there: "certains autres droits qui sont payés par les habitants de l'île." There has been so much distress in this as in other branches of industry that Réouf Pasha ceased to collect the tax now some fifteen months ago, and promised the workmen that he would recommend its suppression to the Porte, and that until an answer should be received he would make no further demand on them. No answer on this subject having been received from

that day to this Réouf Pasha's successor chooses the present moment for reviving the claim, making a demand for fifteen months' arrears of the tax in question; and forasmuch as the men have not wherewith to pay, they have been cast into prison. The occupation seems to be exclusively carried on by Christians, and the dyers having begged me to plead their cause with the Pasha, I thought there was room for asking his Excellency to relax in this instance the rigour of the law; but he refuses to see the impolicy of molesting peaceable people for the sake of a trifling tax of doubtful legality. I have reason to believe that no such tax exists in Roumelia and in many other parts of the Ottoman Empire, its imposition here dating from the time of Mohammed Ali Pasha, of Egypt, when all sorts of arbitrary duties were levied. I further suggested to the Pasha the wisdom of separating the Christian from the Mussulman prisoners, since in these days of religious excitement unseemly and dangerous quarrels are of frequent occurrence, and the Christians have repeatedly petitioned to be lodged apart from the Mussulmans. His Excellency, however, declined to alter the routine of prison life, remarking to me that if quarrels occurred the zaptiehs were there to put a stop to them. But the zaptiehs, being mainly Mussulman Albanians, too often side with the prisoners of their own creed, and before this have roughly handled the Christians under their charge, as I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my despatch No. 6 of March 5. This insensibility of the Governor-General to the plainest dictates of prudence in a serious crisis like the present, when the Deputies of the Assembly are on the spot, and keenly alive to every act of oppression, or injustice, makes me fear that public order will not long be preserved.

The authorities are now systematically disarming the town population, nobody being allowed to carry the knife which the Cretan loves to wear in his belt. The Christians complain that this measure is carried out with undue rigour as regards themselves, and this may possibly be the case, and is the natural result of the employment of a gendarmerie almost exclusively Mahometan. I am satisfied, however, that the Government is anxious to carry through the disarmament with entire impartiality, and only the other day the Chief of Police imprisoned a sergeant for disarming a Christian with unnecessary rigour. The authorities are at their wits' end for means to pay the zaptiehs, whose salaries are twenty-three months in arrears, and who for some time past receive only paper-money, worth 11s. instead of 18s. a-month. The men have only bread to eat, and are going about in rags, no new clothes having been served out to them for two years. Their general good conduct under such harsh and unjust treatment appears to me to be deserving of all praise. The regular soldiers, on the other hand, though unpaid, are well clad and well fed, but are more prone to acts of violence than the police corps.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 212.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 27. Political.)

Canea, Crete, May 27, 1877.

My Lord,

HAVING heard, on what seemed to me pretty good authority, that Turkish soldiers had desecrated a church at a village eight hours to the east of Candia, and had also violated a young girl in the same place, I to-day telegraphed to the British Vice-Consul in Candia to inquire if there is truth in the report. His answer, just received, is to the effect that the soldiers had profaned a church, and that their conduct was very brutal, but that no girl was violated. I have accordingly ordered him to proceed without delay to make an investigation into the circumstances on the spot, and in order not to lose a week (there being but one weekly steamer between this and Syra), to address his report to your Lordship, sending at the same time copies of it to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte and to myself.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 213.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 154. Political.) *Cairo, May* 31, 1877.

My Lord,

PRINCE HASSAN and his contingent of about 6,000 troops, destined for service in Turkey, have not yet embarked from Alexandria, the explanation of this delay in their departure being, as Cherif Pasha informs me, that the attention of the Khedive was called to the sudden departure from Spezzia of the Russian ironclad "Petropaulousky."

His Highness being well aware that his convoy of wooden ships could not cope with an ironclad, and suspecting that the Russians might intend to intercept his expedition, at once countermanded its departure and telegraphed to the Porte to ask them to send, in accordance with their promise, a sufficient naval force to convoy the expedition.

I hear from other sources that the European engineers attached to the Khedive's vessels have made difficulties about proceeding with the expedition.

It remains to be seen whether the Porte can spare a naval force to perform this service, if not, the despatch of the Egyptian contingent to Turkey may be indefinitely postponed.

The regulations affecting the passage of ships through the Suez Canal during the present war have not yet been notified to us, nor, I believe, has the Khedive yet intimated to the Porte that he will put them in force. This delay is probably attributable to his desire to know beforehand what the views of Her Majesty's Government are upon the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 214.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 158. Political. Confidential.) *Cairo, June* 3, 1877.

My Lord,

IN conversation with the Khedive yesterday, His Highness assured me, with reference to the signs of a certain amount of fanatical feeling in certain districts which I had represented to him, that he had immediately telegraphed strict instructions to all the authorities in Upper and Lower Egypt to repress promptly and energetically any acts of insult or hostility on the part of natives towards Europeans, and that he thought he could answer for their not being repeated.

He told me, however, in confidence that, had he strictly obeyed the orders that the Porte had sent here as well as to the other provinces of the Empire, to have the Koran read publicly and to use other means to inflame the religious enthusiasm of the people, I might have had far more serious incidents to complain of.

As it was, he had quietly put the orders on one side, but he earnestly begged me, for his own sake, to treat this information as entirely confidential.

His Highness further informed me that the Porte had telegraphed to him that within a few days they would send three ships to convoy the Egyptian contingent to Turkey; but as the escort was to consist of unarmoured ships, His Highness had again pointed out to the Porte the serious risk of attack from one of the Russian ironclads, which, he had reason to believe, were hovering about the Mediterranean.

His Highness also received news last night from his agent at Constantinople of two considerable engagements near Soukoum Kalé, in which the Russians, 6,000 strong, were defeated, with a loss of 600 killed and wounded and 30 cannon, 18 of which were thrown by them into a river during their retreat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 215.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 102.)

My Lord, *Athens, June* 2, 1877.

A FRENCHMAN named Cyril, who was formerly a leading member of the Commune in Paris, was arrested a few days ago at Lamia, having been found with a certain number of rifles and arms in his possession, and being accused of organizing an expedition for the invasion of the Ottoman frontier.

In connection with Cyril's arrest, an order has been issued by the judicial authorities of Lamia for the arrest of Leonidas Bulgaris, who has been lately mentioned in several of my despatches as a Russian agent, and as engaged in the organization of bands for the invasion of Turkey. He had a kind of recruiting office, and a considerable supply of arms, at Athens; but he is now said to be in hiding, in consequence of the order for his arrest, in virtue of which he will, if it can be effected, be taken to Lamia for trial.

The proceedings in both the above cases had been instituted before M. Deligeorges resigned office.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 216.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 233. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Rome, June* 5, 1877.

IN the course of a general conversation which I recently had with M. Melegari, reference having been made to the possibility of Russia demanding, as one of the conditions of peace, the free navigation of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus for ships of war, his Excellency unhesitatingly declared that he should consider such a condition as inadmissible.

I think it right to mention this because, in Sir Andrew Buchanan's despatch No. 453, Confidential, of the 16th ultimo, his Excellency states:—"From language held to me recently by the Italian Ambassador, his Government would probably also regard the free navigation of the Straits as a concession which might easily be made to Russia," &c., &c.

Your Lordship will perhaps recollect that I reported in my despatch No. 191, Confidential, of the 11th of May, that M. Melegari had stated to me that he considered the continuance "of the existing arrangements which regulate the navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles as a matter of European as well as of English interest;" and I cannot conceive how any Italian statesman could do otherwise, owing to the evident interest which it must be to Italy that there should be no disturbance of the present balance of maritime power in the Mediterranean.

Your Lordship will also not fail to remember that the principal objection which M. Melegari has always expressed to the cession of a port to Montenegro was, lest that port should eventually become a naval station for Russia.

I cannot help thinking, therefore, that General Robilant did not correctly represent the views of his Government in speaking to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna on the occasion referred to.

M. Melegari, in the course of the interview above mentioned, informed me that the Roumanian Agent had communicated to him the Act of Independence voted by the Roumanian Chamber, but he had accompanied it by no request for recognition or observation, and his Excellency, therefore, did not make any observation either.

M. Melegari is of opinion that the question of Roumanian independence can only be treated whenever the time for the discussion of the terms of peace may arrive.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 217.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 235. Confidential.)

Rome, June 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD a short interview with M. Melegari this morning, when his Excellency asked me, in reference to the rumours of efforts to bring about peace, whether I could give him any information on this subject. He seemed to have an impression that an exchange of ideas had taken place between Her Majesty's Government and Prince Bismarck who, he had been informed, had called on Lord Odo Russell and M. d'Oubril on his passage through Berlin, and that there had also been some communication with the Cabinet of Vienna respecting the proposals to be made.

I thought, indeed, I could see in his Excellency's manner symptoms of his being a little put out at nothing having been said to the Italian Government. His Excellency expected, he said, to hear every day of some great event on the Danube, and if Russia should gain a victory, which appeared to him hardly doubtful, the Powers, as it seemed to him, could not offer their mediation too soon.

His Excellency added that he considered England as the leader of the neutral Powers, and, consequently, that it was she who should take the initiative in any mediation. For his own part he adhered to the principle which had formed the basis of Italian policy all along, viz., that of upholding, as far as it might be possible, the territorial integrity of European Turkey. He feared, however, that that principle might now be looked upon as abandoned by England; but still the Italian Government would abide by it until they were obliged to give it up on account of the other Powers doing so. The territorial integrity of Turkey in Asia was, he said, "une autre question."

I informed M. Melegari, in reply to his inquiry, that I knew nothing whatever about the rumoured peace negotiations beyond what I had seen in the papers.

After leaving M. Melegari I paid a visit to Count Tornielli, who said that the policy of the Cabinet of Vienna was to him a perfect enigma; to every possible combination, to granting autonomy to the Turkish provinces, to the creation of small independent States, to a fusion of the provinces with Servia, or an annexation of Bulgaria to Roumania, to annexation to the Austro-Hungarian Empire, they opposed a decided negative; and yet, beyond the alternatives above-mentioned, it was not easy to foresee another solution, and behind the negative policy of Austria it was reasonable to suppose there must be an affirmative one.

I asked Count Tornielli what he believed this affirmative one to be. His reply was, "the aggrandizement of the Austro-Hungarian Empire." There was no country, he observed, where, notwithstanding the semblance of constitutional government, the foreign policy was so entirely in the hands of the Sovereign. If Russia once crossed the Danube, there would be, in his opinion, no stopping her until she got to the Balkan, notwithstanding anything which might now be said to the contrary; it was not an easy thing to check a victorious army; and Russia, once in possession of that country, who was to turn her out? An invasion of Turkey, he said, was a totally different thing from an invasion of another country. In another country, when the Imperial authorities retired, there remained the local and municipal authorities, the Judges, Magistrates, &c.; and though these, for the time being, might be under the control of the military commander of the enemy, yet, on his withdrawal, he left the institutions, already existing in the country, behind him, and regular government became again possible; but drive out the Pashas and their retinue from Bulgaria and what remained? The Russians would certainly have to organize the country, and, having once done so, how was that organization to be replaced? Russia must either retain possession herself, or create an independent State, or annex the conquered territory to Roumania, in either of which cases his conviction was that Austria would claim compensation.

"And if she did," I inquired, "What would Italy do?"

"Nothing," he replied; "why should we wish for territorial acquisitions which would only embarrass us;" nevertheless, for the reasons above given, Count Tornielli considered that it would be very desirable that the Powers should endeavour to mediate before rather than after the passage of the Danube, with the view of saving as much of Turkey as possible, although he seemed to look upon the idea of making a stand for her integrity, so much cherished by his chief, as belonging somewhat to a

bygone time, it having, as he contends, been abandoned by England and every other Power.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

No. 218.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 10.)

(Telegraphic.)

Athens, June 9, 1877.

THERE is no intention whatever of invading Turkey at present. There are no troops available for such a purpose, and the new Government is sufficiently strong to prevent irregular expeditions. The country requires certain military preparations, in view of possible emergencies.

Unless something unforeseen occurs in the Hellenic provinces, the Porte need not apprehend any breach of international duty on the part of Greece.

Such is the substance of the assurances just given to me by M. Tricoupi.

Sent to Constantinople.

No. 219.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Macdonell.

(No. 214.)

Foreign Office, June 10, 1877.

Sir,

COUNT MUNSTER called attention to-day to the Russian Circular respecting the stoppage by the Porte of telegraphic communication with Odessa, and inquired what answer Her Majesty's Government proposed to make to the Circular, and what course they intended to adopt in the matter.

His Excellency was informed, in reply, that Her Majesty's Government had received a copy of the Circular, and were of opinion that it was not a matter in which official pressure could be brought to bear on the Porte. He was reminded that, during the discussions respecting the Telegraph Convention of 1871, the Russian Government had proposed the insertion of an article insuring that private messages should not be interfered with during the progress of a war, but that when this proposal, which was the same as that which they now made, was rejected through the opposition of the Turkish Government, they signed the Convention without the suggested article.

Under these circumstances Her Majesty's Government felt that they could not now insist upon the adoption of the practice which the rejected article would have enforced. His Excellency was told, however, that Mr. Layard would be instructed to communicate the Circular informally to the Porte, and ask what facilities it would be willing to give for the transmission of private messages.

Count Münster referred to the fact that, during the war between France and Germany the German Commanders had allowed transit messages to pass along the French telegraph lines.

His Excellency was reminded that Odessa was now a blockaded port, which was an important element in the case, and it was pointed out to him that it might not be advisable for him to press the subject of free telegraphic communication too hard upon the Porte, as nothing would be easier for the Turkish authorities, if they suspected that any of the important lines at their command were being used for hostile purposes, than to break the cables, a proceeding which might be easily explained as the result of an accident.

His Excellency replied that this was precisely the view taken by the German Government, and that they were not at all inclined to press the question upon the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 220.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Macdonell.

(No. 215.)
Foreign Office, June 10, 1877.

Sir,

COUNT MUNSTER stated to-day that further rumours from Syria, of an alarming character, had reached the German Government, but that as the Porte had sent a detachment of regular troops to preserve order, it was to be hoped that the matter was not serious. The German Government intended, however, to send a ship of war to the coast of Syria, and his Excellency expressed the hope that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople would be instructed to co-operate with his German colleague in inducing the Porte to use its best efforts for the protection of the subjects of foreign States.

His Excellency was informed, in reply, that instructions to this effect had already been sent to the British Ambassador, and that a man-of-war had been ordered to the Syrian coast; he was further told that we had learnt from Constantinople that some troops were to be retained in Syria for the protection of foreigners, and was assured that Her Majesty's Ambassador should be informed that the German Government had again called attention to the subject.

His Excellency expressed himself as being quite satisfied with this assurance.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 221.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 10. Political.)
Jerusalem, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting on the military force now in this district in reference to the state of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 221.

Consul Moore to Mr. Layard.

Jerusalem, May 26, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE had the honour to receive your Excellency's telegram of the 14th instant, in which you are pleased to acquaint me that the Porte had given orders to the Minister of War that a sufficient military force should be left here to protect foreigners and Christians.

As reported in previous despatches, the only force of regular troops now remaining at this military station is one battalion of chasseurs, which is below its full strength, and consists of about 650 men, of whom two companies are recruits taken here. From this battalion three companies have had to be stationed near Hebron to keep the hostile Bedouin tribes in that district in check; another company is quartered at Bethlehem, another at Salt, on the other side of the Jordan, while small detachments are on duty on the Jaffa road; the rest are at Jerusalem.

These troops alone are to be relied upon in case of need; not so the Redif, who desert when they can, and whose discipline is imperfect.

I am informed, however, on the best authority, that the Commander-in-chief at Damascus has asked the authorities here, by order from Constantinople, to send the battalion of Nizam and the Redif to the capital, their place to be supplied by the men of the Moustafiz, who are to be called out. I believe the local authorities intend to object to the removal of the battalion in question, but a formal order from Damascus would have to be obeyed. With regard to the men by whom it is proposed to replace the Nizam, they are open to the same objections as the Redif. Moreover, large numbers of men liable to be enrolled as Moustahfiz are fleeing to the Bedouins to evade the call, and it is to be feared that some of these, having no means of livelihood away from their homes, will take to a predatory life.

But it is the surrounding Bedouin tribes who, by their numbers, constitute the principal danger to public security, and that they are disposed to take advantage of existing circumstances is shown by my late reports, and by the occurrence I am about to mention.

For all these reasons the withdrawal of the battalion would be a most ill-advised proceeding.

Two days ago a caravan bringing grain from the plain of the Jordan was set upon and plundered by a large band of Bedouins on the Jericho road, within three hours' journey of Jerusalem. All the animals, about thirty, were carried off, and the men stripped. To act efficiently against these roving Arabs cavalry is requisite, but this branch of the army is wholly unrepresented here, and it is much to be regretted that the mounted gendarmes are under orders to leave.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 222.

Consul Watkins to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 2.)
Larnaca, May 28, 1877.

My Lord,

SINCE the letter which I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 30th April ultimo, the feeling of insecurity which prevailed amongst the Christian population having increased, I have this day addressed a letter to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, of which I beg to inclose a copy, asking his Excellency to send here one of Her Majesty's ships, the presence of which will no doubt reassure the Christians and at the same time protect, in case of emergency, British interests in this island.

I have, &c.
(Signed) — WATKINS.

Inclosure in No. 222.

Consul Watkins to Mr. Layard.

Larnaca, May 28, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the necessity of the presence here of a man-of-war is now seriously felt by the Christian inhabitants of this island, the feeling of insecurity which prevails being heightened by the knowledge that in a case of any commotion they are without the means of defense, whereas their Moslem neighbours are more or less armed.

I therefore venture to beg that, should the measure meet with your Excellency's approval, your Excellency may be pleased to give the necessary instructions for one of Her Majesty's ships to visit this and other ports of the island, and if convenient to remain here in station for some time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) — WATKINS.

No. 223.

Sir J. Drummond-Hay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 39.)
Tangier, May 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 23 of the 23rd instant, transmitting the copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Agent and Consul-General at Tunis, informing your Lordship that the Sultan of Turkey had despatched the Agent of the Bey of Tunis at Alexandria, named Senoosy, as the bearer of an autograph letter from His Majesty to the Sultan of Morocco, with valuable presents, and amongst them eight women, and stating that as Senoosy is a distant relative of the Sultan of Morocco, it was thought his selection would afford greater facilities for the accomplishment of the mission with which he was encharged.

In my despatch No. 37 of the 17th May, I had the honour of reporting to your

Lordship the information I had received on this subject, and that the Sultan of Morocco had declined to receive Senoosy, as Envoy to His Majesty, from the fact of his being a Moorish subject.

This person is not, as Mr. Wood supposes, a relative of the Sultan of Morocco further than that he calls himself a Shereef, of which class there are thousands in this and other Mahommedan countries, and the majority of these Shereefs are persons of low degree, who have no further claim to be descendants of the Prophet Mohammed than tradition, but who do not possess a genealogical tree like the Sultan of Morocco, and a few other Shereefian Princes of high station in this country and in the East.

The Sultans of Morocco are, as Mr. Wood states, descendants of the Caliphs, and are styled "Emir el Moomeneen," or Prince of Believers, and this circumstance had in former times created a feeling of jealousy on the part of the more powerful Sovereign of the East, the Sultan of Turkey, who is not a Shereef though he reigns over the Holy Cities where their prophet lived and died.

Since I addressed your Lordship on the 17th instant, Cid Ibrahim Senoosy came over to Tangier and had an interview with Cid Mohammed Bargash, and the latter has communicated to me, confidentially, what had passed between them.

Senoosy had informed Cid Mohammed Bargash that he had not the position of an Envoy, but that he was merely the bearer of a friendly letter from the Sultan of Turkey to the Sultan of Morocco, and, therefore, requested his Excellency to facilitate his journey to the Moorish Court in order that he might deliver the Royal letter.

Cid Mohammed Bargash remarked to Senoosy that since no diplomatic relations had taken place between the Ottoman and Moorish Governments for upwards of fifty years, it appeared to him very strange that the present critical moment and mode of communication should have been chosen, and that he must decline taking any steps to further the object Senoosy had in view, without receiving more precise information as to the nature of his mission.

Senoosy replied that a Conference of the foreign Representatives of the Great Christian Powers had lately taken place at Constantinople, and that they had laid down certain rules for the guidance of the Sultan in the government of his country, which His Majesty had been unable to accept, without abandoning his rights as an independent Sovereign, and that His Majesty, therefore, naturally looked around at such a critical moment for the support and counsels of Sovereigns who were of his own creed and who would take a more real interest than even friendly Christian Powers in the welfare of his dominions; that Sultan Abdul Hamid was aware that since the reign of his ancestor of that name, relations had ceased between the Sultans of Turkey and Morocco, but that His Majesty desired to renew them, and had, therefore, sent an autograph letter to that effect to Sultan Mulai Hassan.

Cid Mohammed Bargash, in replying, said that the Sultan of Morocco and his Government would be pleased to enter into more intimate relations with the Sultan Abdul Hamid, and the Ottoman Government, but that a strict neutrality would be observed by the Moorish Government in the present war between Russia and Turkey, and that this policy was expedient, inasmuch as the ports of Morocco were without fortifications to resist the attacks of ironclads; and, if Morocco aided Turkey, this country might be exposed to great disasters and losses.

Senoosy observed that the Bey of Tunis had sent aid both in men and money, without considering, when the safety of Islam is threatened, the prudence of such proceedings.

Cid Bargash replied it was right and proper for the Bey of Tunis, as a vassal, to aid the Sultan as he had done, but the Sultan of Morocco was in a different position, and, as an independent Sovereign, would remain neutral. Senoosy suggested that subscriptions might be raised in Morocco to aid Islam. Cid Mohammed Bargash replied that Morocco was inhabited chiefly by poor people, and the Moorish Government could not lend themselves to forward such an object. Senoosy expressed a different opinion regarding the wealth of his countrymen, and, as Cid Mohammed Bargash informed me, left the impression on his mind that the object of his mission is to obtain pecuniary aid.

I observed to Cid Mohammed Bargash that I thought the language he had held to Senoosy was judicious, and that it would be imprudent for the Moorish Government to send to Turkey—as I had expressed my opinion on a previous occasion—either men, money, or material of war, but that if private individuals chose to raise subscriptions with the view of affording relief to their wounded co-religionists, or to the inhabitants of districts reduced to poverty by the war, there could be no good

grounds for objection, even on the part of Russia, as such pecuniary aid was given both by Mohammedan and Christian subjects of neutral Powers; moreover, money had been lent to Russia by private bankers in Europe. I repeated, however, that it was advisable that, under no circumstances, should the Moorish Government allow their subjects to preach the "Jehad," or Holy War, with the view of raising subscriptions, as it might be found, when too late, that the Sultan could not control his wild and fanatical subjects on the Algerian frontier, and in districts in the neighbourhood of the ports where a large number of Christians and Jews reside.

Senoosy informed Cid Mohammed Bargash that he should proceed shortly on his journey to the Moorish Court, even if his Excellency declined to give him a letter of recommendation.

Cid Mohammed Bargash informed him that he was free to do as he thought proper on his own responsibility.

I shall communicate to Mr. Layard a copy of this despatch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND-HAY.

P.S.—Since writing this despatch, I am informed that Senoosy left yesterday for the Moorish Court.

J. H. D.-H.

No. 224.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 287.)

My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, May 31, 1877.*

I CALLED to-day at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs to take leave of Prince Gortchakow previous to his departure with the Emperor to the head-quarters of the southern army.

His Highness informed me that Count Schouvaloff would return immediately to London, and was the bearer of the reply of the Imperial Government to the note which your Lordship had addressed to him on the 6th instant.

Prince Gortchakow observed that he could not allow his answer to be made known until it had been communicated to your Lordship, tartly observing that your Lordship's note had reached the Cabinet of Rome before it had been placed in his hands.

Consequently his Highness said that he could not impart to me even confidentially the nature or substance of his reply, but that he had instructed M. de Giers, in his absence, to communicate it to me as soon as he had information of its having been communicated to your Lordship. At the same time his Highness expressed his conviction that the interests of the two countries in the East ought not to clash ("se heurter"), and his hope and expectation that the note of which Count Schouvaloff was the bearer, as also the verbal explanation with which it would be accompanied, would be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

I inquired of his Highness in what light the Imperial Government regarded the declaration of independence by Roumania.

Prince Gortchakow replied that he regarded it as a "fait accompli," *de facto*, but not *de jure*. It was a question which could only be treated later, in conjunction with the European Powers.

His Highness believed that the Austrian Cabinet took a similar view of it.

In regard to Servia, Prince Gortchakow stated that Prince Milan and the Servian Government had expressed their readiness in the present conjuncture to act according to the ("volonté") wish of the Emperor, and that it had been signified to them in very decided terms that the Emperor's wish was that Servia should remain perfectly passive.

Prince Gortchakow was unable to say what would be the probable duration of the Emperor's absence, but I am told that, in the official and Court circles, it is expected that his absence will not exceed six weeks.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 225.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 11.)

(No. 289.) *St. Petersburgh, June* 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Emperor of Russia, accompanied by the Grand Duke Cesarevitch and the Grand Duke Serge, left Czarskoe Seloe yesterday evening by Wilna and Bust for Ploetchi, the head-quarters of the army of the Danube.

Count Schouvaloff will leave to-morrow (Monday) for Berlin, where he will stay a few hours to pay his respects to the Emperor of Germany, and will then proceed direct to London, where he hopes to arrive on Friday next.

He called on me yesterday and stated that he had been instructed not to divulge the nature of the answer of his Government to your Lordship's note of the 6th ultimo, of which he is the bearer, until it had been communicated to your Lordship.

He confined himself to expressing a hope that, with the verbal explanations with which he is charged, it will be satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

Colonel Wellesley will leave for the head-quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas on Tuesday next.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 226.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 11.)

(No. 292.) *St. Petersburgh, June* 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship (in translation from the Russian by Mr. Michell) a speech made by M. Aksakoff, on the first meeting of the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society since the transformation of the Slave Committees in Russia into the form and appellation of a benevolent society, which have been placed under Government control and under statutes issued by the Imperial Minister of the Interior.

This speech gives an interesting retrospect narrative of the formation of the Slav Committees some eighteen years ago, their object and their results.

It is in great part attributable to their energy and activity that the political movement which incited the Christian populations in Bosnia and Herzegovina to arms originated, and it was the same flame which in some measure led to the lamentable occurrences in Bulgaria.

During last year the Slav Committees in Russia assumed a power in organizing the armed movement in Servia which attracted the attention, and in a certain degree the alarm, of the Imperial Government, and has necessitated their present action.

It was found to be a danger to the State to allow a political society which was known to be in communication with the Omladina in Servia, which again was under the influence of the International at Geneva, to levy arms, and equip large bodies of volunteers to aid the Servians against Turkey: for, although the cause which enlisted them possessed the sympathies of the Court and Government, it was nevertheless establishing a precedent which might under other circumstances offer serious dangers to the State.

The Imperial Government have, therefore, thought it necessary, without suppressing the Slav Committees (which might at this moment have strongly excited public opinion), to bring them under the control of the Government, and the Slav Committee at Moscow, which first originated the movement, has been transformed into a Slav benevolent society, placed under the direct control of the Ministry of the Interior, with special statutes regulating its action and attributes.

Your Lordship will observe the wide scope given to the action of the Slav Benevolent Society, as referred to by M. Aksakow, which is now a society recognized by the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

Inclosure in No. 226.

Speech made at Moscow, at the First Meeting of the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society, hitherto called the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Committee, by M. Aksakoff, Chairman of that Society.

(From the "Moscow Gazette" of May 14, 1877.)

(Translation.)

Gentlemen,

IT is for the last time that our Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Committee has assembled. Though without ceasing to exist, it now resolves itself into the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society, and will be governed in its activity abroad by the statutes which have been confirmed by the Ministry of Interior. We have at last obtained a legal *status*, and are now recognized openly and positively by the authorities of the State after an extra-legal existence of eighteen years. This legalization confers on us considerable advantages; it places us on a firm and sure foundation; it enables us to benefit by an organization independent of the arbitrary will of any Chairman, and affords the members considerable power of control. Our new appellation as a "Society" has a wider scope of signification than our former designation as a "Committee," which seemed to convey a special and limited meaning, and was not consonant with the number of members, amounting to more than 1,000, which we now possess. Nevertheless, many among you will, of course, feel regret at parting with a name to which we were all accustomed, and which is associated in our memories with a long series of trials and vanquished obstacles, as also of joyful moments of success and ultimate triumph—a name which latterly acquired, thanks be to God, an honoured celebrity throughout Slavdom, and even among the masses of our own lower classes. Eighteen years ago a small band of men, of whom but few remain alive, while all the leading spirits are dead, succeeded in obtaining permission to afford (with their own means, of course) benevolent assistance to Slavs in Russia and abroad, and in the latter case to forward such succour in a tangible form through the Asiatic Department of the Imperial Foreign Office. This at the time appeared to be an unwonted success. Those few "benefactors," as they were extolled in the official papers, empowered the Curator of the Moscow University, Nicolai Bachmeloff, now deceased, to conduct the work of giving material relief, and he faithfully, and with his own hand, kept the first account—more than modest—of our income and expenditure. After the lapse of several years, when Bachmeloff was no more, we commenced to use, in our relations with the Ministry, quite arbitrarily, though more or less naturally, the designation of "Committee," against which the Ministry offered no protest, and such was the origin of the designation of our Committee, which is being superseded by that of "Society."

Of the first group of Slavophils it may be generally said that it was a very "small flock," and their operations at the first onset were on a moderate scale in the confined limits then possible under existing social conditions in Russia. But this small flock, remembering the Scriptural behest, "Fear not, small flock," acted accordingly, and laboured faithfully, though few in number.

Our Slavonic Committee first counted its members by tens, and for a long time the activity of its meetings was of a very unpretending character, being confined to the education of a few Slavs and to the grant of slight pecuniary assistance to several schools, &c. For a length of time the Committee had to contend against opposition in Russia itself, and even with antagonistic views and inimical influences; for a long time the efforts of the Committee were directed merely towards keeping the spark and smouldering fire alive. We see now that the efforts of the Committee were successful and that the flame has burst out. The number of members has increased; branches have been established at Petersburgh and Kief. Exactly ten years ago a Slavonian Congress met at Moscow at the time of the Ethnographical Exhibition, where representatives of all Slavonian races met for the first time on Russian soil in the name of their common unity. A few years afterwards a Russian Orthodox temple was raised at Prague owing to the strenuous efforts of the Committee, and in spite of the protests of *quasi*-sapient and timid partizans in the Slav cause. There is no necessity for any allusion to recent events; they are but too well known. In this manner, slowly and tediously, by narrow paths, dropping many good men on the way, we have at last reached the broad road and attained the boundary of the promised land. The Russian flag is already waving beyond Russian limits, and this flag has been raised for the recovery of the liberty and human rights of the oppressed, humiliated, and despised by

civilized Europe. The slumbering East is awakening, and not only the Slavs of the Balkan Peninsula, but also the whole Slav world awaits its resurrection. A new era is approaching; the dawn of the great Slav day is on the point of breaking.

At such a great historical moment, in the midst of the din of war, martial alarms and anxieties, we are called upon to transform ourselves from a committee into a society, according to Statutes confirmed by a noteworthy coincidence on the 12th April, on the very day of the issue of the manifest declaring war against Turkey. Although the Slav cause has escaped beyond the immediate control of the Committee or of any Society, there is still a great deal of rough and heavy work a-head in the shape of practical sympathy with the Slav races.

And so, with God's help, let us consign to the new Society in all its entirety, tendency, and tradition, the spirit of our Moscow Slavonic Committee. May the same love and sympathy which has been displayed towards the Committee during the last days of its existence, also fall to the share of the Society. May the New Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society number in its ranks all that is right-minded and true-hearted, not only in Moscow, but throughout the whole length and breadth of our native land.

Speech by M. Aksakoff, delivered prior to the re-constitution of the Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Committee into the now officially recognized Moscow Slavonic Benevolent Society.

(Translation.)

IN a speech delivered at Moscow on the 5th of May last, M. Aksakoff, after making a retrospective review of the proceedings of the Slavonic Committee, and dwelling at length on the universal sympathy and enthusiasm pervading all classes in Russia in favour of the great Slav cause, proceeded to speak as follows:—

"Thanks be to God the Committee has a glorious and wide prospect before it. The Emperor has been pleased to sanction the activity of the agents of the Slavonic Committee in the trans-Danubian region, even during the present war; on condition, however, that the proceedings of our agents should be under the control of the Commissioner of Civil Affairs attached to his Highness the Commander-in-chief of our army in the field. Their exertions will be of a charitable nature. This sanction on the part of His Majesty has been received with the deepest gratitude by the Committee, which regards it in the light of a mark of special confidence and as a recognition of our previous activity, which has not been devoid of benefit to the Slav cause. The relations of our agents to the chief civil authority of the army are partly determined by the following rules, which have been confirmed by his Imperial Majesty, and communicated to me by the Minister of Interior.

"1. The Commissioner of Civil Affairs, attached to the Commander-in-chief of the army, in his capacity of chief medium of the Slavonic Benevolent Institutions and of the local wants of the Slavonians in the trans-Danubian region is empowered, under the supreme guidance of the Commander-in-chief, to exercise supervision over the activity of all the Slavonian benevolent institutions and of their agents out of Russia, and especially in Turkish and Servian territories.

"2. He will receive from such institutions both detailed lists of their agents in the above countries, as also information concerning their missions.

"3. He shall have the power to demand from these agents detailed information on all questions concerning their activity on which it may be necessary that the Chancery of the Commissioner should have cognizance of.

"4. He shall be empowered to demand from the agents of the Slavonic institutions a report as to the manner of fulfilment of the duties entrusted to them, as likewise an account of the funds which may have been placed at their disposal.

"5. In the event of any abuse of power on the part of the said agents, and in case of their displaying political activity in prohibited districts, the Chief Commissioner shall be authorized to demand from the institutions the recall of such agents, and to confirm, if necessary, the appointment of other agents in their place. In case of extreme urgency, he may, with the sanction of the Commander-in-chief, take immediate measures to stop any further activity on the part of such agents and to have them dismissed, at the same time informing the institutions of his having done so.

"6. With the sanction of the Commander-in-chief an agent of the Slavonic Benevolent Institutions may be attached to the Chancery of the Civil Commissioner for the purpose of directing the proceedings of other local agents.

"The Civil Commissioner attached to the Commander-in-chief is Prince Vladimir Tcherkaski, whose name is so intimately connected with the emancipation of the serfs in Russia and in Poland. As yet we have only appointed one agent, namely, M. Khomjakoff, who is to accompany Prince Tcherkaski. M. Stanisheff, a Bulgarian, and former student of the University of Moscow, and a pupil of the Slavonic Committee, has been appointed Secretary to M. Khomjakoff; in addition to these M. Narishkui, our former Agent in Servia, will be attached to Prince Tcherkaski as agent of the St. Petersburgh Committee, with the power which we have given him of replacing M. Komjakoff, in the absence of that gentleman.

"The following official instructions have been drawn up for the guidance of our agents as regards the limits and nature of the beneficent activity of the Committee in Bulgaria:—

"'The activity of our agents being of a charitable nature should be chiefly directed towards the support of churches and schools, and towards the amelioration of the condition of the suffering Christian population; as also (and I draw your special attention to these words) towards the renovation in Slavonian countries occupied by our troops, of a true national life in social, ecclesiastical, mental, moral, and also material respects.'

"From this you will comprehend what importance we attach to the presence of our agents in Bulgaria. They will participate in the mission to which Russia herself has been called in respect to the Bulgarian people, and for which our Government does not alone require armed force, but also the co-operation of all the intellectual forces of Russian society. The activity of our agents, therefore, will have a missionary as well as a charitable character. . . . .

"Fortunately for Bulgaria the Moscow Slavonic Committee has educated, in its midst, many young Bulgars, and fostered considerable intellectual forces. Let these now, in conjunction with our agents, at the present resuscitation of the southern Slav race which is so numerous, lay a healthy and solid foundation for its enlightenment and for its civil and religious development. The Slavonic race must disregard Constitutions or European ideas generally. Let them not forget that in the absence of a moral and an intellectual union with Russia, or, in other words, that beyond the pale of the Orthodox religion as a civilizing and guiding principle—no truly independent future, either social or spiritual, is possible for the Slavonic races. Should the Slaves abandon this Orthodox principle that constitutes the essential and fruitful distinction between the Christian East and the West, and the right of the Slavs to independent participation in human civilization, they would become superfluous as Slavonians, and might, without any injury to the interests of humanity at large, surrender their position to western Europeans. Similar warning might, with equal propriety, be addressed to a certain St. Petersburgh newspaper which counsels the Russian troops to leave behind them all ideas of Russian nationality and spirit, and merely to fulfil the mission of propagating the fruits of European civilization among the Bulgars. To this it may be rejoined that in such case not Russian but German and English troops might, with greater propriety, be entrusted with this mission, as the most fitting exponents of European civilization. The original must necessarily be preferred to the copy."

No. 227.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 11.)

(No. 232. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Berlin, June 7, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to telegraph to your Lordship that Count Schouvaloff had passed through Berlin yesterday, but that, owing to his Excellency's special instruction to proceed to England without delay, Count Schouvaloff had been unable to see Herr von Bülow or to visit the Emperor at Leiguitz as his Excellency had engaged to do when on his way to Russia.

I may here observe that Count Schouvaloff's hasty departure from Berlin has only tended to confirm the generally-accepted idea that the German Government have all along been familiar with the nature of the reply which the Russian Government was about to address to your Lordship's despatch to the Russian Ambassador.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 228.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 234. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, June 9, 1877.*

HAVING learnt that the Russian Ambassador had communicated to the German Government the text of Prince Gortchakow's reply to your Lordship's despatch to Count Schouvaloff of the 6th May, I endeavoured to ascertain the impression it had made on Herr von Bülow. His Excellency said that he was now drawing up his report to the Emperor, and that he could only, therefore, give me his personal opinion on the subject in a general manner, without venturing to examine the merits of each paragraph.

His Excellency observed that the confidential nature of the correspondence which had lately passed between your Lordship and the Russian Government offered the best guarantee that, if the two Governments disagreed on any particular point, the exchange of opinions or ideas might still continue.

The document in question, his Excellency thought, was certainly framed in the most friendly and conciliatory terms; of a nature not only to remove all more serious cause of anxiety from your Lordship's mind as to the intentions of Russia, but also as indicating the wish to circumscribe the future action of that Power in a manner which can only affect Turkish interests without peril to the interests which Her Majesty's Government is well justified to defend. In short, said Herr von Bülow, "I think the Russian reply will meet with the general approval of Europe, and I am confident Her Majesty's Government will have seen in the communication with which Count Schouvaloff has been entrusted an additional pledge of the earnest desire of the Emperor of Russia to confine the war to the securing of peace and safety to the Christian populations of Turkey."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 229.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 492.)
My Lord, *Vienna, June 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 480 of the 1st instant, relative to Dr. Rieger's address to the President of the Slav Committee at Moscow, the papers report that the municipalities of three towns in Bohemia have been dissolved for sending similar addresses to the same destination. It is now said, however, that the Government have decided not to prosecute Dr. Rieger.

The Servian Omladinists have expressed their satisfaction with these Czech demonstrations, which the Belgrade "Istok" describes as "marking an august epoch in the annals of history."

I have, &c.
(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 230.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 156.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 10, 1877.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 130 of May 22, Minister for Foreign Affairs declares to me, in a note dated yesterday, which will be sent by messenger, that the Porte entirely agrees with Her Majesty's Government with respect to the principle of the freedom of the navigation of the Danube as regards the restrictive measures actually in force, that can only be provisional and temporary. Their employment leaves untouched the principles and general rules applicable to the navigation of the Danube, which will be again in force as soon as the necessities of war permit.

No. 231.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Rustchuk, June 10, 1877.*

TURKS are amassing and arming Circassians along Danube. These are committing atrocities of every description among Christian villages on this side, and are sent across by night, when they return, without loss, covered with blood. Authorities will deny, but I have most undeniable disinterested ocular evidence.

No. 232.

Vice-Consul Stokes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Sulina, June 10, 1877.*

RUSSIANS attacked Turkish fleet in roads last night with six torpedo-boats; attack repulsed; three torpedo-boats sunk; six prisoners taken; Admiral's ship damaged by torpedo.

No. 233.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 10, 1877.*

INTELLIGENCE has reached Tehran, and is confirmed by Persian Government, that Russians have occupied Kizil-Ewad and Boorneh.

Communicated to India.

No. 234.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 157.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 10, 1877, 6·30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING from Vice-Consul at Sulina:—

"Russians attacked Turkish fleet in roads last night with six torpedo boats. Attack repulsed; three torpedo boats sunk; six prisoners taken. Admiral's ship damaged."

No. 235.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 10, 1877.*

ERZEROUM route being now virtually closed, and the expenses for guards enormously increased, without our having reliable means of checking them, I have proposed to Mr. Layard, subject to your Lordship's approval, to send Embassy Tartars to meet Mission Gholam at Diarbekir or Moossul, as he may consider best.

The expenses of this route will probably fall short of the present increased charges.

No. 236.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 159.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 11, 1877, 12·30 P.M.*

CONSUL at Rustchuk informs me that Turkish authorities believe that the Russians will very soon attempt to cross the Danube near Nicopolis and Turtucan. They believe that in front of Rustchuk there are about 20,000 Russians, but that

only a feint will be made to cross there. The Russians, if they succeed in crossing a sufficient number of troops, will, it is expected, make an immediate attack upon the large earthwork at the back of Rustchuk called Levend Tabia, which completely commands the town and river, but will meet with a desperate resistance.

No. 237.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11, 2 P.M.)

Paris, June 11, 1877, noon.

(Telegraphic.)

THE French Minister for Foreign Affairs says that he knows positively that the Russian ships of war now at Brest are about to sail for Cronstadt, and that the Grand Duke Alexis leaves them and joins the Emperor on the Danube.

No. 238.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 11.)

St. Petersburgh, June 11, 1877, 4·45 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram of the 7th instant respecting risk to shippers of coal to Port Said, Minister for Foreign Affairs states in a note to me dated to-day, that the Imperial Government are anxious not to cause difficulties to vessels to Port Said with coal for British merchant navy.

But as that port is within Ottoman territory, they consider it just that the same formality should be applied as in the case of coals destined for Her Majesty's fleet, namely, by requiring a certificate to be countersigned by the Russian Consul-General in London.

No. 239.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.[1]

Foreign Office, June 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

INQUIRE whether Turkish Government are willing in the present war to accept assistance from the National Society for Aid to the Sick and Wounded in War, on the express understanding that the assistance given on one side will be given to the same extent on the other.

No. 240.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 225. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

IN the course of a confidential conversation which I had to-day with the Russian Ambassador on the subject of his recent communication respecting possible terms of peace between Russia and Turkey, I thought it right to point out to his Excellency that even assuming that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to assent to the terms proposed, as to which I must for the present abstain from expressing any opinion, it did not follow that those terms would be accepted at Constantinople. I pointed out that so long as it had been supposed by the advisers of the Porte that England was ready to take arms in defence of Turkey, English influence at Constantinople was naturally very great; but the attitude of neutrality which we had thought it right to assume in regard to the present war had necessarily affected our position in that respect. We might be advisers, but we could no longer speak with the authority which belonged to protectors.

Count Schouvaloff answered that the object of his Government in the communication which they had made was not so much that Her Majesty's Government should use

[1] A similar telegram was sent to Lord A. Loftus.

their endeavours to press upon Turkey the conditions of peace referred to, but rather to insure the neutrality of England by the evidence thus afforded of the moderation of their intended demands. As regarded the Porte, he had no expectation that the conditions proposed, moderate as they might be, would be accepted, until the Turkish Government had learned by a painful experience how inadequate their means of resistance were.

After some further remarks, I asked his Excellency whether he thought it likely that Austria would assent to that part of the Russian scheme which involved the creation of an autonomic State in Bulgaria, north of the Balkans.

Count Schouvaloff answered that he had no doubt whatever of the assent of Austria, inasmuch as she would be well paid for giving it; and he remarked that the Austrian Government, without incurring any risks or making any sacrifices, would gain territorial advantages greater than those which Russia reserved to herself as the prize of a successful war. He further observed that, with a view to obviate the ill effects which might be produced by any casual and partial publication of the proposal, Prince Gortchakoff had furnished it, in the strictest confidence, both to Count Andrassy and to Prince Bismarck. His Excellency expressed more than once his conviction that nothing was to be apprehended from the opposition of any Continental Power.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 241.

Consul Holmes to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 51. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Mr. Freeman arrived here last night from his tour of investigation into the impalements said to have taken place near Novin and on the banks of the Save. He will not be able to send in his report by this post, but will do so by the next. I may, however, briefly state that, after hearing and weighing the conflicting testimony of a great many people, Mr. Freeman's own impression is that Rado Buyich was not impaled, and he is perfectly convinced that the cases reported to have occurred on the banks of the Save by Mr. MacColl are without any foundation in fact.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. R. HOLMES.

No. 242.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 113. Political.)

Bucharest, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

A CONSIDERABLE number of the Moldo-Wallachian militia is being dismissed to their homes; the above appears to have been caused by the absolute inability of this Government to find the necessary funds for keeping so large a force under arms.

Nothing definite has as yet come to my knowledge respecting the part to be taken by the Roumanian army in the coming campaign; the decided feeling in the country is opposed to the Moldo-Wallachian forces crossing the Danube, and nothing will be decided until the arrival of the Emperor of Russia.

The project, which will probably be rejected by the Russian commanders, is for Prince Charles to cross into the Dobrudja with 10,000 men, to immediately install the Prefects and the whole machinery of a Roumanian hierarchy, with the expectation that, having been once established in those districts, the Roumanian Government, at the peace, would be allowed to annex the Dobrudja, taking the Danube and Kustendji Railway as the frontier.

The above being a political, and not a strategical measure, and moreover, inspired solely in the interest of Roumania, would probably find little favour at a Russian Council of War.

I believe there is no doubt that Prince Gortchakow is much indisposed to

permit a policy of action on the part of Prince Charles; on the other hand, there is the military pressure to make use of a force which, although small in number, might furnish a fair contingent of from 15,000 to 20,000 men, and provided, moreover, with an excellent artillery.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 243.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 115. Political.)
Bucharest, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

THIS morning I had the honour to telegraph to your Lordship that a state of siege is initiated in this place; I do not make use of the word declared, as no public announcement has yet been made to that effect.

Most stringent measures are being taken by the police respecting the passports of foreigners, and hotel-keepers have been informed that if all is not in order, their houses will be closed by the military. To proclaim a state of siege would, I imagine, require the assent of the Chambers, and it is, therefore, more probable that such a measure will merely be executed by the "Pouvoir Administratif" under the head of police regulations.

The above is doubtless aimed at Poles, in anticipation of the arrival of the Emperor of Russia, and it has come to my knowledge that many Poles have been ordered to leave the capital and reside in the country until further notice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 244.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 21.)
Tunis, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 17 of the 7th May, relative to the war between Russia and Turkey, I have the honour to report that on the 2nd instant a Circular Firman was read in the presence of the civil, military, and ecclesiastical authorities, extending the reasons which impel the former Power to wage war against the Porte, which reasons the Firman qualifies as groundless and unjust, with the object of destroying Islamism as well as the Ottoman Empire, in consequence of which the Sultan calls upon all Mahommedan Princes and people to unite and aid in the defence of their religion and country.

It would appear that this Circular Firman or Manifesto has been addressed to all the vassals and Pashas of the Porte subsequent to the "Fetwa" by the Sheikh-ul-Islam declaring the "Djehad," or religious war against her enemy, which renders it imperative upon all Mussulmans to take part in it, either personally or by their contributions in proportion to their means.

As from the very commencement the Mussulmans of this Regency construed into a religious war the declaration of Russia that she undertook hostilities against Turkey in compliance with her Divine Mission, the recent counter-declaration of the "Djehad by the Sheik-ul-Islam has not added in any perceptible degree to the excitement which existed already, and which excitement is somewhat tempered by a feeling of despondency at their inability to efficiently co-operate in a war which both belligerents avow to be of a religious character.

A requisition for 500 or 600 mules having been made upon the Tunisian Government, it is preparing to comply with it to the best of its means.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 245.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 22.)
Tunis, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had the honour, in my previous correspondence, to mention that the majority of the foreign Representatives have counselled the Bey to maintain the neutrality of this Regency by refusing to afford any aid to Turkey, lest the Russian fleet should, by way of reprisal, undertake hostilities against Tunis.

It would appear that the frequent repetition of this advice, and the apprehensions to which it has given rise, has finally led to the belief that Russia had, in reality, intimated to the Bey that, if His Highness rendered any military or pecuniary aid to the Sultan, he must be prepared to see his capital bombarded.

Although I had reason to know that the advice which was thus proferred to the Bey by the agents of neutral Powers and others could not have any great weight with him after the explanations he had received from me as to the political tendencies and views of those who gratuitously gave it, yet, as the Berlin ministerial paper, the "Norddeutsche Zeitung," of the 22nd of May, asserts that Russia had made the intimation in question to His Highness, I deemed it proper to call upon General Khaïreddin, to ascertain from him whether there was any foundation for the statement; and he assured me that, up to the present date, the Tunisian Government had not received from that of Russia any communication of the nature I described to him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

Inclosure in No. 245.

Extract from the "Times" of May 23, 1877.

RUSSIA AND TUNIS.

(By Telegraph.)

(From our Prussian Correspondent.)

Berlin, May 22, 1877.

ACCORDING to the Berlin Ministerial "Norddeutsche Zeitung," Russia has declared to Tunis that if military or pecuniary aid is rendered to the Sultan, the Bey must prepare to see his capital bombarded. The Tunis Government are also disquieted by the concentration of a French force on their frontier.

The Russians have withdrawn from Kaghisman.

No. 246.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(Telegraphic.)
Belgrade, June 11, 1877.

I AM assured that Prince Milan intends starting Wednesday next for Bucharest to pay his respects to the Emperor Alexander, accompanied by his Foreign Minister and three superior officers. Pray send to Therapia the above.

No. 247.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 160.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Secret.)
Constantinople, June 11, 1877, 1 P.M.

COLONEL LENNOX requests me to forward following telegrams to your Lordship, which I do without offering any opinion upon them:—

"Colonel Lennox assumes that he has *carte blanche* as to his movements, but wishes to know whether he ought or ought not to avoid being shut up in a besieged fortress?"

"Colonel Lennox suggests that Engineer officers should be told off to be shut up in Rustchuck, Silistria, and Shumla, to gain experience in defence of fortresses. They could be neutrals, as English officers were during Franco-German war; but in the event of England taking up arms, they could then assist in the defence of those places. Should this be permitted, there should always be two officers together."

No. 248.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Very Confidential.) *Constantinople, June* 11, 1877, 6 P.M.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Austrian Ambassador has sounded him as to whether, if an opportunity offered to propose peace, Austrian mediation would be accepted by Turkey? His Excellency further says the German Ambassador spoke to him generally with reference to the possibility of peace, but expressed his opinion that the Emperor of Russia would not make peace until he had achieved some signal success which would justify in the eyes of his people the sacrifices he had made in going to war, and that Turkey must be prepared to accept the conditions that may be proposed to her.

From what the German Ambassador has said to me, I am led to believe that some of those conditions, supported by Germany, might be the surrender to Russia of Batoum, the right of passage through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles of Russian ships of war, and some kind of right of interference of Russia for the protection of the Slav Christian populations of Turkey. I only gather this from his language and arguments.

No. 249.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

(No. 162.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 11, 1877, 11:35 P.M.

CONSUL at Erzeroum telegraphs that the Russians, after occupying Olti and destroying Turkish stores, &c., abandoned it and retired to Passin. Turks have reoccupied Olti with eight battalions.

No. 250.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

Vienna, June 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

A TELEGRAM received from the Governor of Dalmatia to-day reports that the Turks, having succeeded in provisioning Geransko, are now concentrated at Krugues, and about to force their way to Nichsich.

No. 251.

Vice-Consul Brown to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

Braila, June 11, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

TURKISH gun-boats have left the Matchin branch by way of Hirsova. Torpedoes have been placed opposite Hirsova. Matchin garrison 1,000 regular, 600 irregular troops.

[Remainder undecypherable.]

No. 252.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June* 12, 1877.

COLONEL WELLESLEY has arrived here to-day, Tuesday, June 12.

No. 253.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 12.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June* 12, 1877, 1 P.M.

PASSAGE of the Danube will probably be attempted on the 25th instant.

Immense quantities of bridging "matériel" are collected at Magurelli, and some preparations are being made at Gruia.

The Emperor is pressing forward the arrival of troops, as well as other preparations for bridging at Oltenitza.

No. 254.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1877, 3:25 P.M.

COLONEL SIBORNE reports that Turkish authorities at Sulina will not agree that flag of Danube Commission alone should be used on buildings and vessels of Commission.

Point out to the Porte the danger to which the property of the Commission is exposed by being forced to fly the Ottoman flag during the hostilities now taking place on the Danube.

No. 255.

The Earl of Derby to Consul-General White.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1877.

SEND Heneage to Bucharest for despatches. His return should coincide with that of next Vienna messenger. Fortnightly service to Bucharest may be kept up in connection with Vienna messenger while war lasts. Communicate with Mansfield.

No. 256.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.) *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1877.

THE Russian Ambassador has stated to me, in confidence, the terms which Russia would accept if peace is made before crossing the Balkans.

They are as follows:—

Bulgaria, as far as the Balkans, to be constituted a vassal autonomous province under the guarantee of Europe. The Turkish troops and functionaries to be withdrawn, the fortresses to be disarmed and razed. Self-government to be established, with the support of a national militia, to be organized as soon as possible.

The Powers to come to an agreement for securing to the part of Bulgaria south of the Balkans, as well as to the other Christian provinces of Turkey, the best possible guarantees for regular administration.

Montenegro and Servia to receive an augmentation of territory, to be determined upon in common.

Bosnia and Herzegovina to be endowed with institutions judged by common consent to be suitable to their internal condition and proper to secure to them a good native administration. The situation of these two provinces on the frontier of Austria-Hungary would give this latter Power a preponderating voice in their future organization.

Servia as well as Bulgaria would remain under the suzerainty of the Sultan; the relations of the Suzerain and his vassals to be defined in such manner as to prevent conflicts.

The question of the independence of Roumania to be decided by common agreement.

If the Porte were to sue for peace and accept the above conditions before the Russian troops have crossed the Balkans, Russia would accept peace, but would demand in return, as private advantages, in compensation for the expenses of the war:—

The restoration to Russia of the portion of Bessarabia ceded in 1856, as far as the northern arm of the Danube (that is, excluding the delta), and the cession of Batoum with an adjacent territory.

In the same case, Roumania to be compensated by common agreement, either by the proclamation of her independence, or, if she remained vassal, by a part of the Dobrudjeo.

If Austria-Hungary should demand compensation either for the acquisitions made by Russia, or as a pledge of security against the above-mentioned advantages to be given to the Christian Principalities in the Balkan peninsula, Russia would not object to her seeking those compensations in Bosnia and part of Herzegovina.

If the Porte were to ask for peace and accept the above conditions before the Russian armies have crossed the Balkans, the Emperor of Russia would consent not to push military operations any further. If the Turkish Government should refuse, Russia will pursue the war until the Porte is forced to subscribe to terms of peace. In that case, the conditions of the Imperial Cabinet might be different.

Is there, in your judgment, any probability of the Porte consenting to these terms? If not, any attempt at mediation, in the present state of affairs, seems useless.

No. 257.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 163.)
(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, June 12, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

SAFVET PASHA informs me that the Turkish Government will be happy to receive the aid of the National Society for Sick and Wounded on the conditions mentioned in your telegram of yesterday.

No. 258.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 194.)

Foreign Office, June 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 556 of the 31st ultimo, forwarding a copy of a note addressed by the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador to the Porte urging that permission should be given for neutral vessels on the Danube to ascend above the junction of the River Timok, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the support given by you to Count Zichy's representations, and consider the arrangement proposed by the Porte to be satisfactory, under which neutral vessels will be examined at Ada Kalé by the Turkish authorities, who will be entitled to see that the vessels are not destined for Russian use and have no contraband of war on board.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 259.

Vice-Consul Jago to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 11. Political.)

Damascus, May 26, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship the copy of my despatch of this day's date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Sublime Porte, reporting upon public affairs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO.

Inclosure in No. 259.

Vice-Consul Jago to Mr. Layard.

Sir,

Damascus, May 26, 1877.

ON the 17th instant I had the honour to telegraph to your Excellency in the cypher of the Navy Signal Book as follows:—

"The authorities have been instructed to make ready to embark all the troops and the mounted police of the province, leaving only the militia to guard the country. The Governor-General has replied that he will be unable to levy the taxes, still less to preserve order in such a country as Syria, where so many elements of disorder exist."

In further explanation of the above, I beg to state that the military authorities here having requested the civil authorities (whose duty it is) to call out the "mustaphiz," or militia, the Governor-General referred the matter to the Grand Medjliss of the Province, which, however, declined to make the necessary order, in view of the danger the country would run. The leaders of the people there represented argued: "You can only collect 3,000 mounted police; and, even if you overcome the difficulties of clothing, arming, and mounting them, not 500 men would assemble at Beyrout to embark. The rest would desert, spread themselves over the country, and create disorders.

"Withdraw the troops, replace the mounted police (bad enough as they are) by the militia, and you give arms to men untried and without discipline; and, in view of the elements of disorder which abound in the country, anarchy would reign."

The Governor-General, who naturally shirked the responsibility of the situation which loomed before him, supported this reasoning, and telegraphed to the Porte accordingly, and has since received permission to retain the mounted police. The whole matter thus remains in abeyance. Reflections of want of patriotism have not been wanting on the part of the military authorities upon the Moslem notables, and have been met by the bitter retort: "We remember how, in 1860, we were, through not making a stand at the proper time, sacrificed by the Government and well-nigh ruined, on the plea of direct and indirect connivance in the events of that year; and we decline to associate ourselves with a measure fraught with danger, and which we believe will only tend to consummate the great distress and want which already exist among us."

The crops and pastures of the Hauran have suffered much from locusts and mice, and a dispute the other day between the Slut Arabs of the Sejfá and the people of the Greek Catholic village of Khubab, arising out of encroachments of the flocks of the former, resulted in the death of a Christian and an Arab, and the wounding of half-a-dozen others.

Near Rasbeya (Hermon), a dispute about land and water rights between two Druze factions took place on the 18th instant; and, although the parties do not seem even to have come to blows, some importance has been given to it locally by the civil authorities, in support of their opposition to the withdrawal of the gendarmerie of the vilayet.

Apart from these two incidents, the country around is quiet, and in Damascus perfect tranquillity prevails.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOS. S. JAGO

No. 260.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 39. Political.)

Beyrout, May 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith a copy of a despatch which was addressed by me on the 27th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the recent agitation in Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 260.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 27, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to the despatch which I had the honour to address to Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires on the 31st March last, reporting excitement in the southern districts of Mount Lebanon, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that yesterday I saw Rustem Pasha, who returned the day before from a visit to that part of the country, and his Excellency expressed to me his conviction, from what he saw and heard on the spot, that the agitation was got up by certain intriguers, and what he told me entirely confirms the views and opinions I have expressed in previous despatches.

The Druzes seemed to be glad of the opportunity afforded by the presence of their Governor-General to give expression to their loyalty and attachment to him personally, in which I have no doubt they were sincere, as I believe I have succeeded in convincing them that they would suffer more than any other class of the population should troubles take place in the Lebanon.

The Maronite Bishop, who there is now every moral proof was the author of the recent intrigues and agitation, has left his residence in the Shouf, and retired to the Kesrouan, evidently chapfallen at the failure of his machinations, which were directed chiefly against the authority of Rustem Pasha for personal pique. The absence of this intriguer is an excellent guarantee for the tranquillity of that part of the Mountain, which for some time past I have had the intention of visiting, but have been prevented from doing so by various small matters; and the Governor-General was pleased to express a hope that I have not altogether renounced my idea, as his Excellency considers that my presence would be very reassuring to the Druzes just now, as they have great confidence in me; and my French colleague, whom I met at Rustem Pasha's house, expressed, as he has often done before, a similar opinion. I have therefore the intention, if nothing occur to interfere with the proposed arrangement, of starting on a short tour through the Shouf, after celebrating Her Majesty's birthday, which is here an institution, on the 2nd proximo.

Should I be able to go, I will inform your Excellency by telegraph of my departure and return. I do not anticipate my absence will extend over five or six days.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 261.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 40. Political.)

Beyrout, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a despatch and its inclosures addressed by me on the 26th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople relative to disturbances and excitement in the districts of Gebelé, Tripoli, and Sidon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 261.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 26, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitalé, reporting on the state of affairs in the district of Lattakia.

On the same day (24th) that I received this despatch, Mr. Vitalé telegraphed to me that disturbances had broken out in the district of Gebelé, where the revolted mountaineers were plundering the villages of the plain, and that there were Christians killed and wounded. Her Majesty's ship "Coquette" having left Lattakia on the previous day for Alexandretta and Cyprus, I telegraphed at once that she should return to Lattakia before proceeding to Cyprus, and informed Mr. Vitalé what I had done.

I also informed the Governor-General by telegraph of what had been reported to me, calling the serious attention of his Excellency to the circumstances, and requesting him to adopt energetic measures to put a stop to these disorders. My French colleague took a similar step.

The Wali replied to me to the effect that the disturbance had been reported to him, and that he had already despatched troops to repress it.

For your Excellency's further information, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, reporting the murder of a soldier by a Maronite peasant, and the excitement produced by this event on the Mussulman population of Tripoli. My French colleague having received an identic report, decided to despatch the aviso "Renard," and she left for Tripoli early on the morning of the 25th instant.

Should any further information of importance as to the state of affairs at Tripoli and Lattakia reach me before the departure of the mail, I will not fail to inform your Excellency.

At Sidon last week, I am informed, the Mussulmans were somewhat excited by the preaching, in one of the mosques, of some Dervishes, who denounced the Christians in no measured terms. The congregation afterwards adjourned to a café, where the denunciations were kept up, with a still larger audience, amounting, I am told, to 500 persons, greatly to the alarm of the Christians of the neighbourhood, who began to think of seeking refuge elsewhere, when the authorities interfered and dispersed the crowd in time to prevent any serious consequences from resulting.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 261.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 22 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de porter à votre haute connaissance que le 15 de ce mois j'ai appris d'une source certaine que les Chrétiens du village Elmétten (district de Gébelé) sont presque continuellement menacés par leurs voisins les Musulmans de Zamrine, et que dans la nuit du 9 au 10 courant, environ quinze hommes armés de ces derniers sont venus saccager et détruire les moulins des premiers sis sur la Rivière de Markié en menaçant les gardiens d'être tués s'ils venaient à rebatir les moulins en question. Ce fait ayant été porté à la connaissance de l'autorité de Gébelé par les Chrétiens, elle s'est empressée d'envoyer quelques dix cavaliers et le Mudir de Marchab pour y faire des investigations.

Un certain Mustapha Aga Karkoutli, alors Gérant Caïmacam à Gébelé, et qui vient de retourner, m'a assuré hier que le Mudir de Marchab avait réussi de pacifier les partis, tranquilliser les Chrétiens et mettre ainsi fin à cet incident.

J'ai appris également d'une source certaine que les nommés Mohamad Yahia Dalibrim et Caba Aho, de Djebel Krad, font beaucoup de mal aux Chrétiens habitants des villages Kensobba, Hallouze, et Elhouenyé, du district de Lattaquié, ainsi qu'à ceux d'Enkzik, du district de Djesser (vilayet d'Alep) et poussent les Musulmans contr'eux.

Le Caïmacam de cette ville, ayant eu les noms de ces deux individus, promet de les faire saisir pour assurer la tranquillité des villages en question.

Il paraît que les Ansaryéhs n'ont heureusement aucune intention mauvaise contre les Chrétiens, car jusqu'ici ils maintiennent de bonnes relations avec ceux qui vivent parmi eux. Aussi, les Chrétiens de Sahion craignant leurs voisins Musulmans, envoient tout ce qu'ils ont de précieux pour le conserver chez leurs coreligionnaires habitants dans les villages Ansaryéhs de la Montagne.

J'ai, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 261.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanche to Consul-General Eldridge.

Tripoli, le 23 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

UN malheureux événement est venu troubler la parfaite tranquillité dont nous jouissons depuis une vingtaine de jours. Hier matin, Mardi, on a trouvé un soldat de notre garnison assassiné dans un jardin tout près du château. Il a été assommé d'un coup de massue porté à la tête, puis étranglé. On reconnut sans peine qu'il avait dû être apporté déjà mort dans ce jardin, et jeté par dessus le mur.

Les premiers soupçons se portèrent aussitôt sur un nommé Mansour, paysan Maronite de Hasroun, que l'on savait être le compagnon de débauche du soldat. On l'arrêta dans la journée, et on reconnut que la manche de sa chemise était tachée du sang. On trouva chez lui une couverture ensanglantée, une corde portant également des tâches du sang, et diverses pièces de conviction. On arrêta tous les voisins, et entr'autres une fille qui semble avoir été la cause première du crime. Quelques témoins ont donné des dépositions accablantes. Bref, bien que Mansour n'ait pas encore avoué son crime, néanmoins les charges sont telles jusqu'à présent qu'il reste peu de doutes sur sa culpabilité. Et il ne doit pas être seul.

L'émotion causée par cet assassinat a été très grande. Les Musulmans avaient repris dans la journée d'hier leur attitude menaçante. Des groupes se formaient par toute la ville, et faisaient entendre les injures habituelles. Le Moustarref lui-même n'était pas sans inquiétude. Toutefois, comme le coupable est arrêté, et que justice sera évidemment rendue, comme aussi la cause du crime semble être aussi peu honorable pour la victime que pour l'assassin, il y a lieu d'espérer que cette recrudescence de passion religieuse ne sera pas de longue durée. Mais le plus sûr moyen de la calmer promptement serait l'apparition de l'aviso stationnaire sur la rade. S'il est possible qu'il vienne ici passer quelque temps, le moment est tout à fait opportun.

Je suis, &c.
(Signé) BLANCHE.

No. 262.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 13.*)

(No. 41. Political.)

Beyrout, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith copy of a despatch and its inclosure, which I addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 29th instant, relative to certain recent outrages committed by the Ansayrieh Mountaineers in the district of Markab.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 262.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 29, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith a translation of a petition forwarded to me by the Acting Vice-

Consul at Tripoli, in which details are given of the recent outrages in the district of Markab, where, it would seem, from this document, that the lawless mountaineers are pillaging the villages and killing the inhabitants who attempt to defend their property.

I have not yet heard what steps the authorities are taking to put an end to these disorders, which appear to be of a very serious nature, and with the present inadequate military force in the country, I doubt whether the Government will be able to do much to check them, especially if the Ansayrieh mountaineers really mean mischief.

The French aviso "Renard" was at Lattakia on the 26th instant, but left on that evening when Her Majesty's ship "Coquette" arrived there.

The recent excitement at Tripoli, reported also in my despatch of the 26th instant, is said to have somewhat calmed down, the Maronite, who was suspected of the murder of the soldier, having confessed his crime, and implicated two others, one of whom is a Redif.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 262.

Petition from Christians of Markab to the British Vice-Consul at Tripoli.

(Traduction.)

NOUS soussignés, Chrétiens des deux districts de Markab et de Kawali, avons l'honneur de porter à votre connaissance que dans ces derniers jours les actes d'agression commis contre nous s'augmentent considérablement et se répètent jour et nuit: on pille nos biens, on enlève nos bêtes de somme, point de sécurité pour nous sur les routes publiques, on insulte notre religion et l'on cherche tous les moyens pour nous attaquer.

Nous nous sommes réunis et avertis les uns les autres d'éviter tout ce qui pouvait servir d'excuse de nous attaquer. Pourtant cette réserve n'a servi qu'à augmenter les agressions sur nous: on a coupé plusieurs plantations appartenant à quelques uns de nos confrères, on a pillé, détruit et incendié nos moulins et battu très-sévèrement ceux parmi nous qui s'y trouvaient.

Nous nous en sommes plaints aux autorités, mais malheureusement sans aucun résultat. Nous avons crû mieux faire alors, en vue de sauver au moins notre vie, de nous enfermer chez nous laissant tout soin et même tout produit de toute propriété à nous se trouvant loin de nos maisons.

Un de nos villages, Mezraat-el-Bahir, a été dernièrement attaqué pendant la nuit, les attaquants ont pillé tout ce qu'ils ont trouvé dans le village et blessé plusieurs parmi les habitants qui ont dû quitter leur hameau et venir s'établir dans un autre. Ce fait ayant été porté à la connaissance de l'autorité, le Mudir du district est venu s'informer de l'état des blessés et s'en est retourné chez lui sans donner aucune autre suite à cette affaire. Un autre fait pareil a eu lieu dans un autre village au moment de la récolte. La nuit pendant qu'un des gardes remplissait son devoir, un brigand fit feu sur lui et le tua. Les habitants du village effrayés quittèrent le lendemain leur village et se réfugièrent dans un autre. Aucun résultat n'a aussi été obtenu de la part des autorités, qui ont été dûment informées de ce fait.

La veille de Vendredi passé le $\frac{5}{17}$ Mai un autre de nos villages, El Doueir, a été attaqué, tous ses biens et ses troupeaux ont été enlevés, plusieurs des habitants ont été très-dangereusement blessés. Hier (Samedi) le $\frac{6}{18}$ Mai le village de Bedira, dont tous les habitants sont Chrétiens, a été attaqué, tous ses biens ont été pillés, un des villageois a été tué, cinq autres et trois femmes ont été très-dangereusement blessés, les uns par des coups de fusils, les autres par des sabres, et sont presque tous sur le point d'expirer.

Ceux qui parmi les habitants ont échappé à ce malheur, se sont sauvés dans un autre village, emportant avec eux leurs petits qui pleurent ces malheurs.

Toutes ces agressions se commettent sur les Chrétiens, les quelques villages qui jusqu'ici ont échappé restent exposés aux mêmes dangers qu'ils attendent d'un moment à l'autre.

Pour tous ces malheurs nous nous trouvons aucune consolation et quoique nous ne désespérons pas de la protection de notre Gouvernement, pourtant nous nous

permettons de vous soumettre, M. le Consul, notre situation espérant que comme d'habitude votre Consulat sera touché de nos malheurs, prendra notre état en sérieuse considération, et trouvera les mesures nécessaires pour assurer notre salut et écarter loin de nous le danger imminent qui nous menacent.

Suivent les signatures de six curés et de trente-six individus.

No. 263.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 42. Political.)

Beyrout, May 30, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch and its inclosure, addressed by me on the 29th instant, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting disorders committed by the Ansayrieh and Mussulman mountaineers in the district of Gebelé.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 263.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, May 29, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my previous despatch of this day's date, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a report which I have just received by Her Majesty's ship "Coquette," from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitalé, relative to the disorders in the district of Gebelé, which I consider sufficiently serious to trouble you with all the details that reach me on the subject, as I greatly fear the Ansayrieh and Mussulman mountaineers may take advantage of the absence of a sufficient military force to control them to commit ravages of even a more serious character than those already reported, unless a more energetic and practical man than Zia Pasha is appointed Vali of Syria; since if it becomes known that the Ansayriehs can pillage with impunity, the Arabs of the desert and the Druses of the Hauran will not be slow to follow the example thus set there.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 263.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 26 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que le 23 courant j'ai appris que le village Bédiré, du district de Gébelé, dont les habitants sont des Chrétiens, avait été saccagé par des gens armés et inconnus et qu'il y avait eu des Chrétiens tués et blessés. Le Caïmacam de Lattaquié ne savait rien de cette nouvelle et moi je n'en étais pas bien sûr.

Le lendemain 24 courant j'ai appris d'une source que je crois certaine, qu'il y avait des bandes de montagnards révoltés qui saccageaient les villages de la plaine de Markab, dans le district de Gébelé, et qu'il y avait plus d'un village saccagé et plusieurs Chrétiens tués et blessés.

Dans la même journée du 24 courant, j'ai reçu une espèce de pétition signée par environ soixante personnes des Chrétiens, habitants des villages en question, par laquelle ils font mention de plusieurs incidents plus ou moins importants. Il en résulte que dans cinq villages différents les Chrétiens ont été saccagés, forcés de payer les malfaiteurs, tués ou blessés. Cette pétition est écrite le 20 courant.

Aussi, ayant vu le Caïmacam de cette ville et causé de cela avec lui, il m'a dit que sur la demande du commandant Ali Bey, qui se trouva à Gébelé, il avait envoyé là-bas tous les cavaliers qu'il avait prêts, en ajoutant que la manière par laquelle

cette demande de secours était faite indiquait la vérité de la nouvelle que j'avais reçue.

Sur ce, j'ai cru nécessaire de vous adresser ma dépêche télégraphique du 24 courant, dont j'ai l'honneur de vous transmettre copie, et à laquelle vous avez bien voulu me répondre pour m'informer d'avoir donné instructions à la "Coquette" de retourner ici.

Ce bâtiment de Sa Majesté étant arrivé ici aujourd'hui et ayant vu le Caïmacam de cette ville avec M. le Commandant, il nous a dit qu'il venait de recevoir une lettre du Commandant militaire Ali Bey, par laquelle ce dernier annonce qu'à l'apparition des troupes envoyées de Gébelé à Markab les montagnards ont pris la fuite et que depuis lors rien de fâcheux n'a eu lieu. Les troupes dont dispose Ali Bey sont environ 200 soldats réguliers et 50 cavaliers irréguliers.

C'est très heureux, M. le Consul-Général, que ce sont les montagnards Metaoura Ansariyéhs de Ouadi-Eyoun, et non les Musulmans de Markab, qui commettent ces désordres; ce qui fait espérer que la tranquillité ne sera pas par ce motif troublée en cette ville. Mais je crains qu'il n'en sera pas ainsi dans les autres endroits de ce district, tel que le Canton de Sahioun et celui de Djebel-Crad, où les Chrétiens sont souvent menacés par leurs voisins Musulmans. Les Ansaryéhs de la montagne de ce district continuent à bien traiter les Chrétiens qui vivent parmi eux mais ils menacent les villages de la plaine de Lattaquié, qui sont également Ansaryéhs, mais d'un autre rite.

Mohamad Yahia Dali Brim et Caba Alo, de Djebel-Crad, dont vous informait mon dernier rapport, sont pris et conduits à la prison de cette ville. Croyant que la "Coquette" partira demain Dimanche j'en profite pour vous faire parvenir mon présent rapport par lequel.

J'ai, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALÉ.

No. 264.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 51. Political.)

Scutari, June 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report that the Turkish troops at Podgoritza commenced active operations this morning, and marched into Montenegrin territory.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 265.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 485.)

Paris, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH my despatches No. 447 of the 7th instant and No. 479 of the 8th instant, I had the honour to forward to your Lordship information from Her Majesty's Consul at Brest, of the arrival at that port of several Russian ships of war, on board one of which was his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Alexis.

The Duc Decazes told me this morning that he knew positively that these ships, which had put into Brest only for necessary repairs and supplies, were about to sail for Cronstadt. He had, indeed, he said, been officially informed of this by the Russian authorities.

His Excellency added that he had also certain information that the Grand Duke Alexis was to leave his ship and join the Emperor Alexander on the Danube.

I have, &c.

(Signed) LYONS.

No. 266.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 487. Very Confidential.)

Paris, June 12, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me yesterday that Prince Milan of Servia had informed him through M. de Rochechouart, the French Agent at Belgrade, that he was very much put out ("chiffonné") by the Roumanian declaration of independence, and that he began to feel that it would be impossible for him to remain quiet while war was going on between Russia and Turkey.

The Duc Decazes had, he told me, desired M. de Rochechouart to point out to Prince Milan that all that Roumania had gained was a decision by all the Powers that, by declaring herself independent, she had freed them from all engagements or obligations towards her, and made herself liable to be disposed of at the end of the war in any manner that might be convenient. M. de Rochechouart was, in consequence, to recommend Prince Milan to preserve his neutrality, and to remain quiet, unless he wished to place Servia in the same position in which Roumania had placed herself.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 267.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 488.)

Paris, June 12, 1877.

My Lord,

M. CALLIMACHI CATARGI requests me to forward to your Lordship the inclosed copy of a despatch addressed to him by M. Cogalniceano, on the subject of the Roumanian declaration of independence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 267.

M. Cogalniceano to M. Callimaki-Catargi.

Bucarest, le $\frac{22 \text{ Mai}}{3 \text{ Juin}}$ 1877.

M. l'Agent,

LA note que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser en date du $\frac{2}{15}$ May, a dû vous renseigner amplement sur les causes qui ont entraîné la rupture complète de nos rapports de bonne entente avec la Sublime Porte, et qui forcément ont créé à la Roumanie une situation nouvelle, mais non pas imprévue.

Les agressions incessantes et iniques de l'armée Ottomane sur tout le parcours de notre frontière du Danube n'ont fait depuis lors que surexciter de plus en plus l'esprit public dans notre pays.

Aussi, les effets de cette irritation croissante se sont fait bientôt sentir, et, aux dates des $\frac{21}{9}$ et $\frac{23}{11}$ Mai, nos Corps Législatifs ont spontanément adopté une motion tendant à mettre la Roumanie dans une position d'indépendance, franche et déterminée, vis-à-vis de la Porte Ottomane, et par conséquent de faire cesser à l'avenir l'état de contrainte qui naissait de rapports mal définis entre la Turquie et nous.

Le Gouvernement de Son Altesse Sérénissime le Prince Charles ne s'est pas cru en droit de réprimer ce mouvement. La tentative en eut été, du reste, en ce moment, aussi vaine que contraire aux sentiments de légitime indignation, que le Souverain de la Roumanie portage entièrement avec ses sujets.

L'indépendance absolue de la Roumanie fut donc proclamée par toutes les voix autorisées du pays. Souverain et peuple ont pris la ferme résolution de la défendre, les armes à la main, au même titre que l'intégrité de notre territoire, à laquelle elle se trouve dorénavant identifiée aux yeux de toute la population Roumaine.

Je ne saurais, M. l'Agent, vous faire mieux apprécier le caractère solennel de cette affirmation, qu'en mettant de nouveau sous vos yeux (par copie ci-annexée) les

paroles mémorables, par lesquelles Son Altesse Sérénissime a bien voulu répondre, le $\frac{10}{22}$ Mai, aux félicitations qui lui ont été apportées par les Corps Législatifs.

La déférence que nous nous plaisons à témoigner en toute occasion, au Gouvernement auprès duquel vous représentez, M. l'Agent, les intérêts de notre pays, me fait un devoir de vous inviter à porter à la connissance de sa Seigneurie Lord Derby cet acte, qui a pris le caractère d'un article de foi dans notre existence nationale.

Du reste, à partir du moment où les anciennes Principautés Roumaines sont entrées dans la jouissance des bénéfices qui leur furent reconnus par la puissante protection du Gouvernement Anglais, la Roumanie n'a jamais eu l'occasion de douter un instant que son développement progressif ne fut dans les vues de ce Gouvernement.

L'acte, auquel des circonstances impérieuses et tout à fait indépendantes de notre propre action, nous a fatalement et hâtivement amenés aujourd'hui, n'étant que la conséquence obligée de cette protection efficace, il ne nous est plus permis de douter qu'il ne soit bien vu dès à présent à Londres, quand même les complications actuelles en ajourneraient la reconnaissance officielle à une époque que les événements et le bon vouloir des Puissances peuvent seuls rapprocher.

Nous apprécions à sa juste valeur la réserve qu'imposent à chacun les circonstances exceptionnelles de ce jour; aussi, malgré le désir, malgré le besoin même que nous éprouvons d'être confirmés le plus tôt possible, dans notre nouvelle situation politique, par un acte d'entente internationale, nos vœux modestes se réduisent, pour le moment, à obtenir de la part du Ministère Anglais un simple acquiescement à la ligne de conduite que nous avons suivie, sous le poids de bien grandes difficultés, et, nous tenons à l'affirmer hautement, en dehors de toute influence extérieure.

Par dessus tout, nous aspirons, M. l'Agent, à gagner de nos bienveillants protecteurs la promesse qu'en aucun cas il ne sera fait violence à la nation Roumaine, dans le but de la contraindre à renouer jamais ses relations avec la Sublime Porte.

Une communication de cette nature aurait pour but de circonscrire, dans un cercle bien déterminé, l'activité présente de notre pays. Elle éviterait à la nation Roumaine les regrettables conséquences d'un état d'incertitude, qui, trop longtemps prolongé, pourrait lui devenir gravement préjudiciable, en lui faisant perdre cette confiance dans l'avenir qui l'a guidée jusqu'ici.

Etant assurée de l'appui des Puissances en ce qui concerne le maintien et la garantie de son indépendance, comptant alors fermement sur le droit de porter officiellement sa voix dans le règlement international de ses intérêts, à l'issue de la guerre actuelle, la Roumanie s'appliquerait à maintenir résolument la ligne de conduite qui a su lui concilier toujours l'approbation et la bienveillance des Cours Garantes.

Elle pourra suivre cette voie, qui de tout temps lui a été si salutaire, avec d'autant plus de facilité, lorsqu'elle se sentira totalement dégagée des liens mal cimentés qui la rattachaient à la Turquie.

Aussi nous osons espérer que son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères voudra bien reconnaître qu'un surcroit d'autorité accordé à l'acte que vient d'accomplir la Roumanie, n'aurait d'autre effet que de raffermir à l'avenir la paix et la prospérité dans un pays qui deviendrait un des éléments les plus utiles de l'Europe Orientale.

Notre conduite dans le passé a pu déjà rassurer toutes les Puissances Garantes sur le but que nous poursuivons. Notre conduite ultérieure prouvera à tous, et en particulier à nos puissants voisins, que notre politique n'est qu'une politique de conservation.

Si aujourd'hui, nous nous détachons de la Turquie, c'est pour ne plus être exposés à subir les entraves qu'elle n'a jamais cessé d'opposer à notre développement normal.

Le Gouvernement de Son Altesse Sérénissime le Prince Charles est fermement convaincu qu'en accédant et en s'associant à la déclaration d'indépendance, si énergiquement exprimée par les Chambres Roumaines, non seulement il a agi dans l'intérêt réel de la nation, mais qu'en même temps, il a préparé aux Puissances Garantes un nouveau terrain commun d'entente et d'accord pour l'avenir.

Si réellement il n'est pas tombé dans l'erreur—et il est déjà autorisé à le croire—il est aujourd'hui en son droit et devoir d'espérer, de solliciter et d'attendre une approbation entière, ou tout au moins une adhésion préalable, qui le raffermisse dans la voie salutaire où il a cru devoir s'engager.

Il appartient à vous, M. l'Agent, tout en communiquant par lecture et en copie la présente note à son Excellence M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères, d'y joindre l'assurance de la profonde gratitude avec laquelle le Gouvernement Roumain recevrait du Cabinet de Londres une nouvelle preuve de sa haute bienveillance, présentée cette fois, tout au moins, sous la forme d'une promesse rassurante pour l'avenir politique de la Roumanie.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) COGALNICEANO.

Speech of His Highness Prince Charles, of May 10/22, 1877.

Vous me rappelez les paroles que j'ai prononcées il y a onze ans, alors que pour la première fois j'ai mis le pied dans le palais de la nation. Ces paroles sont chères à mon cœur; elles ont été le guide de mon règne pendant la série d'années que nous avons parcourues ensemble.

Aujourd'hui, comme au 10 Mai, 1866, je ne regrette pas d'avoir quitté ma famille ni de m'être éloigné de mon pays natal; non, je n'en ai pas regret, car j'ai fait de la Roumanie ma patrie; car j'ai fait de la nation Roumaine ma famille.

Au contraire, aujourd'hui que j'ai appris à connaître les beautés de ce pays et les destinées auxquelles il est en droit d'aspirer, aujourd'hui que j'ai pu apprécier à leur valeur les hautes qualités qui distinguent le peuple Roumain, ce m'est une vive joie de me rappeler le jour où j'ai été élu Prince, le jour où je suis arrivé au milieu des Roumains, le jour où vous m'avez confié un Trône illustré par tant de grands Princes, de glorieux défenseurs de l'indépendance nationale et de la croix contre le croissant. Un seul nuage voilait encore les années écoulées; une seule humiliation continuait à exister pour les Roumains et leur Prince; je veux dire ces liens mal définis et sans nul fondement, qui s'appelaient, à Constantinople, suzeraineté, à Bucarest, vassalité.

Ecarter ces liens, auxquels répugnent et notre position et nos intérêts, et même nos droits *ab antigno*, les remplacer par les relations qui, au XIX^e^ siècle, unissent entre eux les Etats et les peuples libres, tel a été le but constant des deux générations Roumaines, surtout depuis 1857 jusqu'à ce jour, et je suis en droit d'affirmer que mon élection, mon arrivée, sur votre appel, des sources du Danube aux bouches de ce grand fleuve, enfin la mission même de mon règne, n'ont eu d'autre signification que d'affranchir la Roumanie de ces liens.

Ces liens, la Sublime Porte les a rompus d'elle-même, au cours d'événements que nous n'avons ni désirés ni provoqués. Nous n'irons pas les rétablir. N'est-ce pas vous—n'est-ce pas la réunion de vous, Corps d'Etat—n'est-ce pas la nation toute entière, qui avez déclaré et proclamé que, par la rupture de ces liens, la Roumanie entre dans son ancienne indépendance comme peuple libre, comme Etat d'une individualité absolue, comme membre utile, pacifique et civilisateur de la grande famille des Etats Européens?

C'est maintenant à l'énergie et au dévouement des fils de ce pays, c'est à la prudence politique des Corps de l'Etat, c'est aussi à moi—permettez-moi cette affirmation—c'est à mon zèle, à mon activité, à mon infatigable constance qu'il appartient de poursuivre et d'atteindre, pour la nouvelle situation politique de la Roumanie, une consécration Européenne.

La bienveillance, la haute sollicitude avec lesquelles les Grandes Puissances et les plus augustes Souverains accueillent tous nos efforts, tous nos actes, pour renaître à une vie nationale, nous autorisent à espérer, que dis-je, nous donnent la ferme confiance que ce puissant concours ne manquera pas à la Roumanie, dans ces moments suprêmes, alors qu'elle ne réclame que ce qui lui revient à titre de peuple digne d'être libre, de pays qui n'a pas trompé l'attente de l'Europe, d'Etat qui a la force et l'intelligence nécessaires à l'accomplissement de la mission qui lui est assignée par sa position géographique. Avec cet espoir, avec cette foi, avec cette volonté, l'indépendance absolue de la Roumanie, loin d'être une inquiétude pour la paix de l'Europe et pour la tranquillité des Etats voisins, aura comme effet, j'en ai la ferme conviction, non seulement de donner satisfaction à nos exigences nationales, mais de répondre à un haut intérêt Européen.

Je vous remercie encore des paroles que vous m'avez adressées en ce jour mémorable.

La Princesse s'associe à ces remercîments, et nous formons d'une même voix ce

souhait: Vivent les Représentants de la Roumanie, et, au-dessus de nous tous, vive la Roumanie!

No. 268.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 489.)
My Lord, *Paris, June 12, 1877.*

IN obedience to the instruction contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 338 of the 8th instant, I have communicated to the Duc Decazes the substance of your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Layard, No. 160 of the 4th instant, respecting the state of siege at Constantinople, and have stated to him that you would be glad to be informed what instructions may have been given to the French Representative on the subject.

The Duke told me yesterday that he had not yet given instructions to the French Chargé d'Affaires, but that he would examine the question, and should be glad to find himself in accord with Her Majesty's Government in regard to it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 269.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Sandwith.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 13, 1877.*

I APPROVE the advice which you gave to the Governor of Crete respecting the imprisonment of certain dyers for non-payment of a trade licence and the separation of Mussulman and Christian prisoners in the gaol, as reported in your despatch No. 26 of the 26th ultimo.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople will be instructed to call the attention of the Porte to these matters.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 270.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 43. Political.)
My Lord, *Erzeroom, May 17, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a letter I have addressed to the Governor-General of this province, calling his Excellency's attention to the disorderly conduct of the Circassians coming from the district of Sivas for the seat of war.

The authorities here are either not disposed to control the Circassians, or they have not the power to do so, and consequently nothing is done to protect the people from their rapacity, or to prevent wholesale robbery.

I have not yet heard of murders on the road, nor of outrages on women, but everything short of these is perpetrated so frequently, that the villages on the lines of march are being rapidly depopulated.

In this town the Circassians are apparently masters of the situation, for no attempt whatever is made to keep them in order, and it is very probable that as no notice is taken of their daily acts of pillage in the bazaars, their maltreatment of the Christians, and their abuse of the Mussulman families on whom they are quartered, they will proceed to the free use of their arms on the population, and that distressing acts of wanton cruelty will become of frequent occurrence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

Inclosure in No. 270.

Consul Zohrab to the Governor-General of Erzeroom.

Erzeroom, le 13 Mai, 1877.

Excellence,

L'INSUBORDINATION des auxiliaires Circassiens, qui se trouvent à Erzeroom, a été porté à la connaissance de votre Excellence, qui en l'avouant a bien voulu déclarer qu'il était de haute nécessité de débarrasser la ville de leur présence; malheureusement l'arrivée continuelle de ces gens, ainsi que le refus de partir de plusieurs Chefs, rendent cette décision très difficile à remplir; néanmoins la ville en souffre beaucoup, et si des moyens efficaces pour imposer à ces Circassiens ne sont pas employés il est plus que probable que nous aurons à déplorer des événements bien funestes.

La conduite des Circassiens venant du côté de Sivas et allant à la frontière indique une manque de discipline qui porte une grave responsabilité sur les Chefs te qui doit être l'objet de l'attention sérieuse de votre Excellence.

Il paraît que les Circassiens qui sont déjà arrivés ont presque ravagé le pays sur leur ligne de marche et que leur conduite a été tel que déjà les villages commence à être abandonnés même dans le voisinage d'Erzeroom; ainsi Djennis et Karaboyouk, dans cette plaine, ont été désertés par leurs habitants Musulmans et Chrétiens, et si les Circassiens qui doivent encore venir ne sont pas tenus sous une discipline très stricte et sévère, je prie votre Excellence de croire que le Gouvernement aura à déplorer non seulement la ruine complète de cette province, mais aussi l'aliénation de l'affection du peuple, soit Musulman, soit Chrétien.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 271.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

(No. 45. Political.)

Erzeroom, May 22, 1877.

My Lord,

THE leader of the Circassians, Moussa Pasha, arrived here, and departed three days since for Ahmed Moukhtar Pasha's head-quarters, with all the Circassians who had been collected here. This town has thus been delivered from the presence of a horde of savages, over whom the authorities had no power, and who were daily becoming more insolent and threatening towards the inhabitants.

The mounted police of the province, having been called to serve in the campaign as cavalry, several squadrons have passed on to head-quarters. The squadron belonging to Erzeroum left this yesterday. I was present when the force marched out. Many of the men, I observed, were very old, all were poorly clad, and generally the mounts were weak; some of the men were riding bare-backed. All had Winchester rifles. The entire strength of the police cavalry will be about 700.

I was pained to observe, when the Erzeroum squadron left, that not a word of encouragement was uttered to the men by any one, but I heard many expressions of contempt, apparently elicited by the appearance of the men, but which were in reality spoken against the superior officers of the army, against whom the feeling is now dangerously bitter.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 272.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

(No. 26. Political.)

Trebizond, May 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a despatch which I have addressed this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, reporting the passage here of forty Polish volunteers going to join the Erzeroum army.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 272.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Layard.

Trebizond, May 29, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that a company of forty Poles, under the command of Major Dubrodsky of the Turkish Cossacks, arrived here on the instant from Constantinople, and left two days after to join the Turkish army at Erzeroom.

It would seem that the main object in sending this nucleus of volunteers with a national banner is to induce Poles serving in the Russian army to desert their ranks and join their countrymen.

They were received here with great marks of sympathy. The principal merchants among Turks, Greeks, and Armenians, offered them a banquet at an hotel, where champagne was not spared. A band was in attendance, and the hotel was brilliantly illuminated.

On the day of their departure about 100 Turks, headed by the Mouhtar (Chief) of the quarter where they resided, preceded them at some distance on the Erzeroom road, and on their arrival at that spot, after having embraced each of the forty volunteers, offered prayers for their success and their safe return.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 273.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

(No. 557. Confidential.)

Therapia, May 31, 1877.

My Lord,

I INSTRUCTED Mr. Sandison to endeavour to ascertain whether there be any truth in the reports referred to by Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tunis in his despatch to your Lordship No. of (copy of which was inclosed in your Lordship's despatch to me No. 117 of the 17th instant), as to a secret agent having been employed by the Porte to obtain the friendship and alliance of the Emperor of Morocco, and that to this end the Sultan had sent to His Shereefean Majesty six beautiful women as a present.

Safvet Pasha, of whom I made very confidential inquiries on this subject (without letting him know from whom I obtained my information), assures me that there is no foundation whatever for these reports. His Excellency observed that for a considerable number of years no relations of any kind whatever have existed between Turkey and Morocco. The reason he gave for it was that the Sultan of Morocco had rather avoided establishing any intercourse with Turkey for fear that, as the ruler of a Mahommedan country, he should have to acknowledge the Sultan's supremacy as the Vicar of the Prophet.

His Excellency then went on to say that, as far as Turkey was concerned, she had no object in continuing to remain on the present footing with Morocco, and that, therefore, she would gladly seize an opportunity of establishing, with the help of Her Majesty's Government, friendly relations with that State.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 274.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 14.*)

(No. 560.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 1, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis with reference to increased taxation and war contributions, and to the employment of criminals in the army. I brought Mr. Dupuis' statements to the notice of the Minister of the Interior, and I beg to inclose a Memorandum of the reply to his Excellency on the subject from Mr. Dragoman Marinitch.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 274.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, May 25, 1877.

Sir,

I BEG leave to inform your Excellency that reports prevail here that all taxes due next year will be levied in anticipation; also that every inhabitant, whether Christian or Mussulman, will have to pay a war tax, from 1,000 piastres downwards, according to the means of the individual; and that all officials in high position in the capital will receive no pay while the war lasts.

A rumour spread the other day, to the effect that all convicts would be forwarded to the seat of war, caused me to inquire of the Vali as to its truth. His Excellency informed me that the question was merely put to the prisoners to ascertain their feelings, and that they all returned a ready response; but that he did not think, if they were sent forward, it would include murderers and assassins.

I regret to have to report to your Excellency another outrage. A respectable man of Ortakeuy has just informed me that on the 20th instant some Circassians entered the house of a Greek in Kadikeuy, and murdered the owner and wounded a gypsy.

This being Friday I have not been able to see the Governor-General on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 274.

Memorandum.

VOICI les renseignements qui m'ont été fournis par le Ministre de l'Intérieur en réponse à la communication du Vice-Consul Dupuis :—

Le Gouvernement n'a pas même songé à faire rentrer les contributions de l'année prochaine.

Il n'est pas non plus exact qu'une contribution de guerre sera prélevée sur les populations Chrétienne et Musulmane, d'après les moyens de chaque individu, et que les hauts fonctionnaires dans la capitale ne recevront pas de paye avant la fin de la guerre actuelle.

Ces rumeurs ont pris leur source de ce que le Gouvernement vient de doubler le taxe sur les moutons pour subvenir aux frais extra de la guerre. Le Gouvernement est très gêné, il est vrai; mais ne cesse pas de payer ses employés, et il le fera autant que ses moyens le lui permettront. J'espère qu'il sera toujours en mesure de pouvoir leur procurer au moins un morceau de pain.

Quant à ce qui concerne l'envoi des criminels sur le théâtre de la guerre, le Gouvernement se propose de faire relâcher des détenus qui ont encore une année de prison à subir. Mais il ne s'agit pas d'étendre cette mesure à tous les criminels sans distinction. Toujours est-il qu'elle ne comprendra pas les grands criminels.

Djevdet Pacha a envoyé un télégramme pour ordonner des investigations au sujet du meurtre commis par les Circassiens à Kadikeuy.

(Signé) MARINITCH.

Le 30 Mai, 1877.

No. 275.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 14.*)

(No. 561. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 1, 1877.*

I AM informed, on good authority, that at the private audience given by the Sultan to Prince Reuss, when his Excellency presented his letters of credence, His Majesty, after the usual compliments, entered at once upon the subject of the present war, which His Majesty declared to be a very iniquitous one, and one which he had in vain endeavoured to avert by every means in his power.

Russia, His Majesty observed, having in view other objects than those she had put forward, finally refused to be satisfied even with the reforms proposed by the Conference, which had been duly accepted by himself and his Ministers. As for guarantees, they were fully to be found in the Constitutional Charter granted by him last year, which his subjects, Christian as well as Mahommedan, had since continued to look upon as the greatest boon conferred upon the country and themselves. But Russia, His Majesty continued, was determined to have a war, the calamities of which must now be deplored by the whole world.

The German Ambassador, in reply to the Sultan, expressed the Emperor's deep regret at having seen the war break out. His Excellency assured His Majesty that Germany was entirely disinterested with regard to it, and that her feelings towards Turkey were friendly, adding that His Majesty would have occasion to judge better of their sincerity hereafter.

The rest of the conversation turned upon general subjects, and chiefly upon the kindness and hospitality which His Majesty had formerly received from the Emperor of Germany on the occasion of the visit of his uncle, Sultan Abdul Aziz, to Berlin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 276.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 14.*)

(No. 562. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 1, 1877.*

I AM informed that when the Austrian Ambassador was received in audience by the Sultan on his return to his post, His Majesty asked after the Emperor of Austria's health, and inquired "what His Imperial Majesty was doing." Count Zichy replied that His Imperial Majesty's time was much taken up by military affairs.

This answer seems to have struck the Sultan, and after the audience he inquired anxiously of Safvet Pasha what Count Zichy meant by it. His Excellency endeavoured to remove the impression which it appeared to have made upon His Majesty's mind, by assuring him that it was not intended as a threat to Turkey, but that Austria, like some other States, had to make certain military preparations in consequence of present events.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 277.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 14.*)

(No. 563. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 1, 1877.*

A FEW days ago, in conversation with the Grand Vizier, I alluded to the fact that not a single Bulgarian who had received a Protestant education, or had joined the Protestant community, had been in any way concerned in the rising of last year. I pointed out to his Highness how important it was, in the interest of the Porte itself, to encourage and protect a peaceable, law-abiding community that had thus

proved its loyalty to the Sultan, that was foreign to political intrigues, and was now scattered over many parts of the Empire. I told his Highness that its Chiefs had stated to me that the Porte refused to recognize the Protestants as a community, and had denied them a proper representation and the rights that were enjoyed by every other religious sect in the country. This, I thought, was bad policy, as the Protestants, from their numbers and respectability, now formed a considerable body.

His Highness replied that he was well disposed to encourage the Protestants. They had proved themselves, as I had stated, quiet and orderly people, who had given no trouble to the Government. He had every desire to protect and encourage them. Any persecution or vexations they complained of came, not from the Turkish Government or authorities, but from rival Christian sects. If I would send the "Vakil," or representative, of the community to him he should be happy to listen to all that the Vakil had to say, and to do what was in his power for the Protestants.

I accordingly gave an introduction to his Highness to the Vakil. M. Hagop Matteosian, who was very kindly received, as your Lordship will perceive by his letter to me, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 277.

M. Matteosian to Mr. Layard.

Constantinople, May 31, 1877.

Sir,

I BEG to convey to your Excellency my sincere thanks for the kind influence so readily exerted in behalf of the Protestant community. This influence has had very happy results.

I called on his Highness the Grand Vizier to-day. He received me very cordially, and assured me that he would give the necessary orders for the speedy settlement of all the difficulties which we have brought to the attention of the Sublime Porte. He charged me to call upon his Highness, and inform him of the progress of our affairs.

On this occasion I mentioned to his Highness only our most pressing business, especially since his Highness was good enough to request me to call on him again.

Gratefully acknowledging your Excellency's kindness in giving attention to our representations, I have, &c.

(Signed) HAGOP MATTEOSIAN.

No. 278.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 566.) *Therapia, June* 2, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAD the honour to receive yesterday, by Messenger Leeds, your Lordship's despatch of the 22nd ultimo, forwarding to me a copy of the instructions which Count Andrassy had addressed to the Austrian Representatives at St. Petersburgh and Constantinople in regard to the interruption of the navigation of the Danube in consequence of the military operations of Russia in Turkey, and directing me to address a representation to the Turkish Government similar to that which the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires had been instructed to make. Later in the day I received your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date asking me whether I had made this representation.

I have the honour to state that Baron Herbert, the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, did not communicate to me a copy of his instructions, nor did he speak to me on the subject.

On the receipt of your Lordship's telegram of the 21st I told the Austrian Ambassador, who had arrived here on the 18th ultimo, that I had been instructed by Her Majesty's Government to address a representation to the Porte similar to that which his Excellency had been instructed to make, and, as I informed your

Lordship, his Excellency replied that he was about to send a note to the Porte relating to the freedom of the Danube, with special reference to the Austrian vessels which were detained in the river below the juncture of the Timok, and that he had heard from Vienna that I had been instructed to support him. This, I informed him, I was ready to do, in a note or otherwise. Count Zichy thought that verbal representations on my part would be sufficient, and he gave me subsequently a copy of his note, which I had the honour to transmit to your Lordship in my No. 556 of May 31. As your Lordship has learnt by my despatches, and as shown by the inclosed instructions to Mr. Sandison, which he read to Safvet Pasha, I have made repeated representations on this subject to the Turkish Government, informing it that I had been instructed by that of Her Majesty to support the demands of the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador with respect to the navigation of the Danube.

It was not until yesterday that I was made acquainted, by your Lordship's despatch No. 139, with the instructions which were sent to Baron Herbert with respect to the general question of the freedom of the navigation of the Danube. Yesterday, being Friday, there was no attendance at the Porte. To-day I have sent in to Safvet Pasha a note in similar terms to those instructions, copy of which I have the honour to inclose.

Your Lordship will perceive that the delay in carrying out the instructions conveyed to me by your Lordship's telegram of 21st May has arisen from the fact that I had not been made acquainted with the note addressed by Baron Herbert to the Porte, in pursuance of his instructions from Count Andrassy (inclosed in your Lordship's despatch of the 22nd instant), and that there was, consequently, a confusion between that note and the one subsequently addressed by Count Zichy to Safvet Pasha, copy of which was transmitted to your Lordship in my No. 556, and which I was led to believe was the one referred to by your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 278.

Mr. Layard to Mr. Sandison.

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, May* 31, 1877.

INFORM Safvet Pasha, or, in his absence, Musteehar, that, acting upon the instruction of Her Majesty's Government, I support note sent in to-day by Austrian Ambassador with reference to the navigation of the Danube, and withdrawal of neutral vessels to above Timok.

Inclosure 2 in No. 278.

Mr. Layard to Safvet Pasha.

Sir, *Therapia, June* 1, 1877.

IN consequence of the war between Turkey and Russia, Her Majesty's Government have been under the necessity of considering the effect which the military operations upon the Danube may have upon the commerce and navigation of the lower part of that river.

The 109th Article of the Final Act of the Congress of Vienna of 1815 has laid down as a general principle that the navigation of rivers dividing or passing through several States shall be entirely free, and shall not be closed in any way as regards commerce, and subject only to police regulations. This principle was confirmed as regards the Danube by the XVth Article of the Treaty of Paris of 1856. In accordance with its stipulations, no impediment whatever can be placed in the way of the free navigation of that river.

These international agreements do not, it is true, imply the absolute neutrality of the river-way. Except as regards the works and establishments formed by the European Commission of the Danube, and the members of that Commission, declared to be neutral by the 21st Article of the Public Act of 1865, the freedom of navigation guaranteed for the Danube could not prevent, it must be admitted, the lower course of the river and its two banks from being comprised in the struggle which has just commenced.

The duties which arise out of the attitude of neutrality that Her Majesty's

Government have thought fit to adopt in presence of the actual conflict, prevent their insisting upon the right of free navigation of the Lower Danube in opposition to the measures which the belligerents may take in connection with their military operations.

But, whilst admitting that the incidents of war may cause temporary impediments to the navigation of the Danube, Her Majesty's Government consider it their duty to reserve in the most formal manner as regards the belligerent Powers the principle of the freedom of the navigation of that river.

I am instructed to submit this consideration to the Turkish Government. If Her Majesty's Government consent to undergo the inconvenience inseparable from a state of war on the line of the Danube, it is with the clear understanding that this exceptional state of things is not in any way to be quoted hereafter as a precedent against the freedom of the navigation of the river; that the necessary restrictions of this freedom, which the exigencies of war may render absolutely necessary, shall be in conformity with the principles of international law; that these restrictions shall not exceed the limits required by the most imperious necessity; and that as soon as the state of military operations may permit, the belligerent Powers will come to an understanding with Her Majesty's Government to re-establish the freedom of navigation of the Lower Danube.

I am instructed by Her Majesty's Government to request the Turkish Government to transmit to them, with as little delay as possible, a Declaration in conformity with the above considerations.

I avail, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 279.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 14.*)

(No. 567.) *Therapia, June 2, 1877.*

My Lord,

LAST week I was present at a sitting of the Turkish Chamber of Deputies. As an attempt has been made to write down this new-born Parliament, and it has been spoken of with contempt and ridicule by a very high authority in the House of Commons, I may perhaps be allowed to say something about it.

At the time of my visit the Chamber was discussing a Bill concerning municipal taxation. I may state with confidence, and with some experience of the House of Commons, that I never saw a debate carried on with more order and propriety. Members may either speak from their seats or from a tribune, after the French fashion. With the exception of one individual, a Greek, they addressed the Speaker, or President, from their places. Their speeches were short, and to the point. Each article of the Bill before them was discussed, explanations were demanded of the representatives of the Department of the Government that had submitted the law to the Parliament, and were at once given. It was then put to the vote, and was passed without a division. Each Deputy had a copy of the Bill before him, and followed with the greatest interest and attention the discussion. I did not observe one exception.

Once during my presence there was a little expression of dissatisfaction in the House. The exceptional Greek, to whom I have alluded, went into the tribune with a bundle of papers, and began to read a speech which threatened to last for an indefinite time. It related to the history of Turkey in general, and especially to the grievances of the Christians. The President once or twice represented to him that, although his speech might properly be delivered on a suitable occasion, it had nothing to do with the question in discussion, which referred to a matter of detail of local administration. The Deputy, however, persisted, and at last the House, becoming impatient, called upon him to comply with the regulations, to obey the President, and to come down. This he was at last obliged to do. In the English House of Commons the Speaker would certainly not have allowed him to go on as long as he did.

No public assembly of the kind in Europe could perhaps show a more respectable, intelligent and dignified body of men than the present Turkish Parliament. Christians and Mussulmans from all parts of the Empire, even an Arab with his half-Bedouin dress, are seated without distinction together. Among the Mahommedans there are many Mollahs, or teachers of the Koran in their white turbans.

The Christian speakers, who predominated the day that I was present, were listened to without any sign of impatience. They spoke with the most complete freedom, and without any restraint. The President rarely interfered, except to point out to a Deputy that he was wandering from the question in debate.

The arrangement of the Chamber, as regards secretaries, reporters, &c., is more after the Continental than the English fashion. It is to be regretted, I think, that the Turkish Parliament should have adopted, for the most part, the French regulations. My experience of the Spanish Cortes has shown me how ill-calculated they are to promote the speedy transaction of business, and the true ends of a National Assembly.

The President of the Turkish Chamber of Deputies, Ahmet Vefyk Pasha, has been violently attacked in the English press for interfering with free discussion, and for arbitrarily and rudely interfering with the speakers. From all that I have learnt from the Deputies themselves, I believe this charge to have been an unjust one, and to have been made at the instigation of those who had no wish that the Parliament should succeed.

It must be borne in mind that this was the first attempt to bring together, in a popular assembly, men from all parts of the Empire, Mussulmans and Christians, who were entirely ignorant of the duties they had to perform, and of the way to perform them. Had they not been directed and controlled, at first, by a strong hand, there would have been general confusion, and the experiment would probably have failed. I know no man in Turkey so competent to be their President as Achmet Vefyk Pasha, from his knowledge, his honesty, and his determination and vigour of character. It is surprising, considering the materials with which he had to deal, that he has succeeded so soon in bringing the House into an orderly and business-like Assembly. For some months there has been no complaints, even on the part of those who have done their best to discredit the Turkish Parliament, that the President has unnecessarily interfered in its discussions, or has in any way restrained the perfect freedom of debate. If there be any cause of complaint, it is perhaps in the opposite direction.

That the Turkish Deputies have shown remarkable independence and boldness in their discussions, have denounced misgovernment, and demanded the redress of grievances, is now generally admitted. They have not hesitated to attack powerful Ministers, and criticisms have even been made which indirectly affect the Sultan himself. They have insisted that a complete and honest budget of the national finances should be placed before them, and the Commission appointed to look into the public expenditure sent a few days ago to the Ministries of War and Marine to demand a full statement and explanation of the contracts entered into by their Departments. It was partly on this account that the Military Commission, to which my despatch No. 528 of the 28th ultimo referred, was named. The appointment of Zuhdi Bey to a financial mission to London and Paris gave rise to a debate on the uncontrolled expenditure of loans by the Government, which ended in a vote demanding the recall of their Commissioner.

As the Turkish Parliament has shown these and other proofs of independence and national feeling, which might be called in other countries "patriotism," much may reasonably be hoped from it hereafter. It furnishes one of those rare cases of a new institution working better than even its most sanguine advocates could have expected. I hear this admitted on all sides. Whether it will continue to work equally well, and whether it is destined to become a really efficient control on arbitrary rule, and on the bad and corrupt government hitherto existing in the Turkish Empire, must depend upon circumstances.

It is most probable that one of the results of the complete defeat of Turkey by Russia will be the destruction of the Turkish Parliament. Russia cannot permit the establishment and success of constitutional institutions in this country. They would give a bad example to the inhabitants of the Russian Empire, and might contribute to the prosperity and union of the various populations of the Turkish Empire.

There is a strong political party in Turkey opposed to the Parliament, and, as this party is unfortunately at present strongly represented in the Palace, attempts are being made to put the Sultan against it. I trust that they may not succeed; but a few days ago His Majesty was nearly persuaded to consent to its arbitrary dissolution. It appears to me to be of great importance that the Chamber should be kept together as long as possible. When conditions of peace between Turkey and Russia come to be discussed, a popular Assembly, which may be said fairly to

represent the country, may prove of great use and value. This is a consideration which, I think, should be kept in view, in the interest of the Sultan, as well as in that of Europe. In the present weak and disorganized state of the Turkish Government and Administration, the mediating Powers might avail themselves of the existence of such a body.

According to the understanding when the Parliament was called together, its session would be brought to an end very shortly. The next Parliament is to be elected according to an electoral law framed by the Government. That law has not yet passed. The members of the present House are declared to be mere nominees of the Porte. Although such may be, and probably is the case, they have shown an independence and intelligence which tend to prove that the selection was, on the whole, not a bad one, and leads some people to think that so great a Parliament would not be brought together if elected by universal, or some very low, suffrage.

In conclusion, I may venture to express my opinion that, if the Turkish Empire is to be kept together, and if the interests and good government of its various populations, without distinction of creeds, are really aimed at, it should be the policy of England to employ what influence she may have at the Porte to support and encourage this attempt at a national representation.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 280.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 569.)

Therapia, June 3, 1877.

My Lord,

I AM informed by Mr. Consul Blunt that thirteen of the brigands, or pirates, who effected a landing near Dédé Agatch, as reported in my despatch No. 530 of the 30th ultimo, have been captured by the Turkish authorities, and prove to be Greek subjects of the Porte, and not Hellenes as at first suspected.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 281.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 571. Very Confidential.)

Therapia, June 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of further letters relating to the proceedings of the Poles in this country. They are written by the same person as those of which I have before sent copies to your Lordship, and they have also been shown to the Sultan. I understand that His Majesty has already given large sums of money from his own purse to promote the schemes to which they refer. It is not impossible that one of the objects of the writer may be to get money.

A certain M. Edwin Wrzesniowski, an engineer employed on the railway between Constantinople and Ismidt, has recently been appointed "Provisional Intermediary Agent" for the Affairs of Poland in Turkey. His credentials, which have been shown me, purport to come from "le Mandataire de la Pologne," and are dated from "Villa Broelberg, près Zurich," May 12, 1877, and signed by a Count, whose signature I could not decypher. They are stamped with the arms of Poland.

It is not very probable that these intrigues with a Polish party in Gallicia will lead to much, but the Porte appears to attach some importance to them, and I have, therefore, thought it well to keep your Lordship informed of them.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 281.

Letter from Vienna to the Polish Committee at Constantinople.

Vienne, le 25 Mai, 1877.

Mon cher Ami,

LA situation à Vienne n'a pas sensiblement changé depuis ma dernière lettre, cependant l'arrivée de la réaction royaliste au pouvoir en France n'a pas manqué d'ouvrir aussi en Autriche des nouveaux points de vue et de provoquer des nouvelles inquiétudes. Les affaires intérieures de la France, il est vrai, n'intéressent pas immédiatement la Monarchie Autrichienne, notre Cour aimerait même mieux la Monarchie que la République en France; mais ce bouleversement a du nécessairement mettre la Prusse sur ses pattes de derrière, et du moment où la Prusse a peur de la France la première chose qui en résulte pour elle c'est de conclure une alliance la plus étroite possible avec l'Italie. Or l'Italie, comme vous savez, n'est pas bien disposée pour l'Autriche; au contraire nous savons pertinemment qu'elle n'attend qu'une bonne occasion pour se ruer sur elle et pour lui prendre le Trentino, Trieste, l'Istrie et même la Dalmatie, si elle y arrive. Si la Prusse était entraînée dans une guerre avec la France, il est évident qu'elle ferait bon marché de son amitié avec l'Autriche, surtout dans le cas que l'Italie lui demanderait de lui laisser la main libre du côté de Trentino. Dans ce cas donc l'Autriche se trouverait abandonnée par la Prusse, menacée par l'Italie, et toute seule vis-à-vis de la Russie qui, dans la situation pareille, ceci n'est pas douteux, préférerait évidemment de s'entendre d'un côté avec la Prusse et de l'autre côté avec l'Italie, que de garder son amitié pour l'Autriche abandonnée, isolée et menacée de tous les côtés.

Voici l'ordre d'idées qui depuis quelques jours se fait entendre à la Cour et qui provoque des préoccupations d'autant plus grandes que la conduite de la Russie vis-à-vis de l'Autriche devient de plus en plus énigmatique. A toutes les réclamations de notre Cabinet elle donne des réponses parfaitement satisfaisantes; mais enfin l'indépendance de la Roumanie a été proclamée sous sa protection et sans prévenir l'Autriche, et sa conduite vis-à-vis de la Serbie est tout ce qu'il y a de plus équivoque. Cependant il est de fait que la Serbie se prépare sérieusement à la reprise de la révolution, l'argent lui est fourni par la Russie, et les officiers Russes présents à Belgrade y dirigent ces travaux. Aussi paraît-il pour sûr que la Serbie, tôt ou tard, et au plus tard au moment du passage du Danube par l'armée Russe, rentrera en campagne, et il est plus que probable qu'elle sera secondée par 20,000 ou 25,000 hommes de l'armée Roumaine, commandés par des officiers Russes, qui passeront le Danube du côté de Kalafat. L'Autriche ne se propose pas du tout d'occuper la Serbie ou la Bosnie avant le passage par l'armée Russe du Danube; mais si les prévisions ci-dessus sont justes elle se trouvera alors en Serbie non en face de l'armée révolutionnaire Serbe seule, mais en même temps aussi en face d'une armée Russo-Roumaine.

C'est ce qu'on commence à prévoir ici et c'est ce qui préoccupe notre Ministère. Cependant cela n'empêche pas le Gouvernement Autrichien de faire preuve d'une amitié la plus sincère pour la Russie: et la dernière démarche qu'on a fait ici en cet ordre d'idées consiste en la permission donnée d'autorité aux chemins de fer de Galicie de transporter de la Russie en Roumanie toutes les marchandises destinées à l'armée Russe. Veuillez donc noter, comme fait avéré, que, depuis huit jours, la Nordbahn, à commencer de Bezakowa, et la Carl-Ludwig-Bahn, à commencer, d'un côté de Brody, et de l'autre côté de Bolwo-Saryska, et ensuite la Lemberg-Czernowitz Bahn, transportent tous les jours 40 waggons de chaque point de jonction, ce qui fait 120 waggons par jour, chargés d'uniformes, de comestibles, d'armes et de munitions. Les Polonais, qui ont les chemins de fer de Galicie entre leurs mains, ont dûment constaté que la plupart de ces marchandises consiste en armes et munitions, de sorte qu'il n'y a pas de doute possible à ce sujet. Aux journaux amis de la Turquie qui ont réclamé et protesté contre cet abus de la neutralité M. Andrassy n'a donné aucune réponse. Voilà la situation.

Pour ce qui concerne la situation en Pologne je vous ai télégraphié les données principales. La formation d'un Comité Polonais à Constantinople, qui se compose de personnes inconnues et n'ayant aucune influence, ni dans l'émigration, ni dans le pays (MM. Bogdanowicz, Holiz, et Bezozowski) ainsi que la nomination de M. Zimmerman, comme Chef de la Légion Polonaise à Constantinople, a froissé les conservateurs Polonais qui y voyait un préjudice porté à leur position. Immédiatement après il s'est formé à Lemberg un comité secret composé de MM. Miocki, Darowski, et Radziszewski, personnes peu populaires et dirigé secrètement par M. Agaton Giller, ancien membre du Gouvernement National de 1863, ce qui a

froissé encore plus, parceque l'on craignait la reconstitution du Gouvernement National de 1863, qui était passablement étourdi et qui ne gouvernait le pays qu'à l'aide de la terreur. Il s'est est suivi qu'une opposition acharnée s'est manifestée aux rangs des grands propriétaires Polonais, qui sont les seuls à fournir les moyens nécessaires à toute action, et cette opposition a été encore plus accentuée par la polémique dont elle avait été suivie et qui était entretenue avec la plus grande verve d'un côté par le "Czas" de Cracovie et de l'autre côté par la "Gazeta Narodowa" de Lemberg. Grâce à l'influence de l'aristocratie Polonaise, qui n'est pas à dédaigner, je vous le promet, l'on est même arrivé à gagner le "Dziennik Poznanski," journal libéral, et l'on l'a déterminé à se ranger du côté des conservateurs.

Mais depuis huit jours j'ai réussi à amadouer l'opposition et à calmer les esprits. Voici ce que j'ai fait à ce sujet. J'ai écrit avant tout au Prince Czartoryski de Paris, qui se trouve actuellement à son chateau "Hieniawa" en Galicie, à plusieurs de ses amis, à sa chancellerie à Paris, à la rédaction du "Czas," qui se compose de grands propriétaires, aux directeurs de la "Gazeta Narodowa" et du "Dziennik Pozenanski," et à M. Giller, et en même temps pour y exposer la vrai situation et pour demander aux meneurs de l'opinion populaire dans ce pays d'envoyer immédiatement leur représentant en Galicie afin d'y calmer les passions si inopportunes et de déclarer que le Royaume de Pologne ne peut que blâmer l'opposition que les Polonais de Galicie ont mis en scène contre la formation d'une légion Polonaise, et qu'il se réserve, au contraire, de prendre l'initiative d'un mouvement favorable à la Turquie dans un temps donné.

Aucune de ces démarches n'est resté sans un bon effet. J'ai reçu de tous les côtés des réponses satisfaisantes et de tous les côtés l'on m'a dit que personne en Pologne n'est au fond opposé à la Turquie, qu'on est même prêt à faire tout son possible pour la Turquie, mais qu'on ne se soumettra pas à la direction des compatriotes inconnus, et qu'on me demande à nouer des rapports directs avec le Gouvernement de Constantinople, de faire un rapport sur ce que la Turquie désire et sur ce qu'elle peut offrir à la Pologne, et ensuite on y avisera. La polémique des journaux a déjà cessé. Hier deux membres du Club Polonais de Vienne sont venus me voir pour m'engager à nouer des rapports directs avec Constantinople; des Polonais de Cracovie m'ont en même temps accrédité auprès de son Excellence Aleko Pacha à Vienne, et aujourd'hui j'ai reçu une lettre de M. Giller de Lemberg, qu'il m'a envoyé par un courrier exprès, et par laquelle il m'apprend qu'il est prêt à adapter son activité aux besoins de la situation, m'engage beaucoup à régler les rapports avec Constantinople et me demande de lui donner des instructions sitôt que possible. Je vous envoie ci-joint en coupure la date et la signature de cette lettre pour que vous voyez que ce que je dis est sérieux.

Vous voyez donc qu'au fond rien n'est encore gâté, que dans toutes ces manifestations oppositionnelles il n'y avait que des questions personnelles et que tout est encore à faire. Je ne puis pas vous garantir, il est vrai, de pouvoir provoquer dans les deux ou trois semaines une manifestation publique, il faut y frayer le chemin mais ce ne sera pas long, si vous me donnez une instruction et fournissez d'argent, qui est indispensable pour les frais des journaux, des dépêches, des courriers, &c., comme je vous ai télégraphié.

Étant accrédité auprès votre Ambassadeur, son Excellence n'a pas tardé de m'accorder un entretien que j'ai eu avec lui Samedi passé. Mais avant tout je vous demande la permission de vous dire tout franchement que j'étais tout étonné, tout ébahi d'entendre de sa bouche cette opinion comme quoi M. Andrassy était le mieux disposé pour la Turquie, voir même "son ami des plus sincères." M. l'Ambassadeur m'a même conjuré de ne pas attaquer M. Andrassy dans le "Morgen Post," parceque comme ce journal est censé être ami de la Turquie, ses attaques contre M. Andrassy ne seraient qu'un vrai "malheur pour ce pays."

Pour ce qui concerne le "Morgen Post," je ne vous dirai que ceci: que si ce journal a gagné dans les six semaines plusieurs milliers d'abonnés, et s'il est lu dans les sphères les plus élevées de Vienne, ce n'est que grâce au courage avec lequel il dévoile et blâme la duplicité et la politique de M. Andrassy et la nullité de son caractère. Pour ce qui touche M. Andrassy lui-même, je ne comprends pas du tout de quelle façon on peut arriver à trouver qu'il est ami de la Turquie.

J'ignore ce qu'il pense au fond de son cœur, mais cela m'est indifférent; en politicien je ne puis le juger que d'après ses faits. Eh bien! qu'est-ce qu'il a fait pour la Turquie? Pendant son voyage à St. Pétersbourg il s'est entendu avec M. Gortchakow à mettre la question d'Orient sur le tapis; immédiatement après il

a envoyé à l'Empereur en Dalmatie, rien que pour réveiller les populations Slaves de ce pays—il a nommé M. Rodich, un Slavophile acharné, comme Gouverneur de Dalmatie, et il l'a "rendu indépendant du Ministère Cisleithan," et M. Rodich a provoqué, stimulé, et protégé l'insurrection en Bosnie et en Herzégovine, en fournissant de l'argent et "des armes pour rien" (*sic*) aux insurgés; il a fait sa Note de Décembre—tout ce qu'il y a de plus insensé et nuisible pour la Turquie—il a signé la Note de Berlin de M. Gortchakow; il est allé à Reusstadt, et c'est de là qu'il a fait fermer le port de Klek; il a admis à l'Omladina de siéger à Neusnatz, sur le territoire Hongrois, et de préparer la révolution en Serbie; il n'a pas bougé lorsque la Serbie a éclaté contre la Turquie—son Ambassadeur, M. Zichy, n'était que l'Attaché de M. Ignatiew. A la Conférence de Constantinople il a voté pour la Russie; il ne s'est opposé ni à la déclaration de la guerre par la Russie, ni à la déclaration de l'indépendance par la Roumanie; il a contribué à empêcher la Turquie d'occuper la Roumanie, et maintenant il fait transporter par les chemins de fer de la Galicie des armes et des munitions pour l'armée Russe!

Je vous demande pardon, mais à juger d'après ces faits, qui sont incontestables, M. Andrassy n'est rien moins qu'ami de la Turquie, et je vous promets que la Turquie n'a pas d'ennemi plus acharné que ce monsieur.

Comme je n'ai pas manqué d'exposer à son Excellence cette manière de juger M. Andrassy, et que cela a évidemment fait une certaine impression sur elle, elle m'a prié de lui en faire une note par écrit. Mais je n'ai pas besoin de vous dire que du moment où j'ai entendu de la bouche de son Excellence une opinion si décidemment contraire à la mienne, sans avoir la moindre défiance, cela va sans dire, j'ai cru devoir m'abstenir de toute note écrite sur la personne du Ministre au pouvoir. Cependant je le fais ici, et j'y ajoute que je suis toujours prêt à entretenir mes rapports avec M. l'Ambassadeur que je verrai demain ou après-demain, et que je prierai pour ne pas trop le fatigner, de me mettre en rapports avec Falcon Effendi, que je pourrais voir très souvent, même tous les jours s'il le faut.

Je vous remercie beaucoup des dépêches que vous avez bien voulu m'envoyer, la "Morgen Post" en a profité, et je vous prie de ne pas négliger ce journal, qui ne demande pas mieux que d'avoir assez d'informations pour pouvoir servir avec effet les intérêts de la Turquie.

Inclosure 2 in No. 281.

Letter from Vienna to the Polish Committee at Constantinople.

Mon cher Ami, *Vienne, le 25 Mai*, 1877.

C'EST la deuxième lettre que je vous adresse aujourd'hui. Je viens de recevoir une nouvelle lettre de Prince Czartoryski qui, après avoir consulté les principaux meneurs du parti Conservateur en Pologne, me presse de nouer sitôt que possible des rapports directs et intimes avec la Sublime Porte. Je vous envoie une coupure de sa lettre avec le dessus de l'enveloppe, comme pièce justificative. Le Prince rentre déjà immédiatement à Paris, parceque c'est là qu'est son poste comme chef de l'émigration, tandis que par sa présence dans le pays il pourrait avoir l'air d'exercer une pression sur l'opinion publique du pays, ce qu'il faut éviter par ce que dans ce cas la Russie pourrait dire que telle manifestation du pays n'était qu'artificiellement provoqué par l'émigration.

Maintenant après avoir reçu encore d'autres informations de la Pologne, je puis vous garantir le succès de l'affaire voulue. Dans le courant du mois prochain toute l'opinion publique du pays se dressera manifestement pour la Turquie, et l'on pourra la déterminer à toute démonstration qu'on voudra. Une action deviendra aussi possible si toutefois des événements imprévus ne paralyseront le courant provoqué. J'attends ce soir même un courrier de Varsovie, qui doit m'apporter des communications importantes. Si je vois que le travail devient encore plus pressant je vous télégraphierai. En attendant la question principale, c'est le fournissement des frais.

Les dernières nouvelles de Berlin disent: (1) Que la Prusse prend décidemment position contre la France; et (2), que l'alliance entre la Prusse et l'Italie est sur le point d'être conclue. Toutes ces deux nouvelles, si elles se vérifient, sont favorables en ce sens, que, si cette alliance se fait, l'Autriche ne pourra pas bouger contre la Turquie, et si la Prusse est occupée par la France la Pologne prendra courage, ne craignant plus une intervention armée de la Prusse en Pologne.

No. 282.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 578.) *Therapia, June 6, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt, stating that the Governor of Adrianople has furnished him with a list of the Bulgarians now imprisoned in that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 282.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.) *Adrianople, May 31, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to state that since my return to Adrianople I have given my best attention to the matter of the Bulgarian amnesty with which your Excellency had been pleased to entrust me.

The Vali has just furnished me with a detailed list, in Turkish, of the persons implicated in last year's disturbances, who are now in confinement at Adrianople. This list states the offence and the sentence pronounced upon each prisoner. Pending the receipt of a similar list which his Excellency has telegraphed for from Philippopolis, the following summary of the number of persons liable to the several terms of punishment may be of interest to your Excellency.

Bulgarians.	Prisoners.
To 5 years' hard labour	13
5 " "	14
7½ " "	11
10 " "	10
13 " "	1
15 " "	6
Hard labour for life	5
	59

Turks.	Prisoners.
To 9 years' hard labour	1
7 " "	4
5 " "	4
	9

The Vali is expecting daily the detailed list from Philippopolis, and as soon as it is received I shall have a confidential consultation with his Excellency on the whole subject.

I may mention in the meanwhile that no official intimation regarding the promulgation of the amnesty has yet reached Ali Pasha.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 283.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 579.) *Therapia, June 6, 1877.*

My Lord,

IN continuation of my despatch No. 545 of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to forward herewith, for your Lordship's information, and for communication to the War Office, a further report from Colonel Lennox, containing notes relative to the operations on the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 283.

Colonel Lennox, R.E., to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Shumla, June 1, 1877.*

I BEG to forward the following items of intelligence from the Danube.

Various points on the left bank of the Danube, from above Widin down to its mouth, are occupied by Russian or Roumanian troops, but as yet the Russians do not seem to have made any real attempt at a passage, and it is not known where the real attack or attacks are likely to be.

Starting from the mouth, I have heard but little as to what is going on near Toultcha, or how far towards Galatz the Turkish gunboats (one wooden, one monitor) in the lower waters could advance, but the Russians have, or profess to have, torpedoed the river somewhere below Galatz and again near Braila, thus completely getting possession of this part of the river.

The Russians are said to have heavy guns in position near Braila, and could probably effect a passage near there without serious opposition.

A Turkish flotilla, consisting of seven or eight vessels in all, have until recently been stationed near Matchin, their coaling station being Potbashi, which is exposed to fire from the Russian batteries.

The gunboats have been repeatedly in action. A day or two previous to the 29th of May, two Russian torpedo boats (probably Thornycroft launches) made a night attack; two Whitehead torpedoes were fired at about a distance of 70 yards, the first missed, the second sank the "Seifi" armour-plated gun-boat (two guns, sixty-eight men); the crew, or most of them, were saved. One torpedo launch was reported to have been sunk, this is doubtful.

As the Russians are reported to have passed from Ibraila by the Paska or western arm, and to have torpedoed the river (Old Danube) near the south end of the Matchin channel, it is now intended to withdraw the flotilla to Hirsova. Arif Pasha went down on the 29th May to see if (supported by artillery and a land force) the channel can be searched, and, if necessary, cleared, and the remaining vessels taken through to Hirsova.

It is now thought possible that the "Lutfi Djelil," whose loss was mentioned in my letters Nos. 62 and 67, was destroyed by a Whitehead torpedo; from the rumoured accounts it does not seem probable; such a report would, of course, benefit the Russians. If the flotilla be safely withdrawn, wooden tugs will be used as cruizers or patrol vessels, the gun-boats being reserved, if possible, for a real attack.

About Silistria little or nothing has been seen of the Russians. The north banks are flooded for an immense distance.

At Turtokai a Russian attack is thought very probable by the Turks. I have seen thence the Russian camp at Oltenitza, and there cannot be less than six battalions there; very likely there are about twelve battalions, two regiments of cavalry, and four batteries, as the Turks say.

On the 29th, two Russian battalions left, marching towards Kalarasch. Three or four batteries, each of three or four guns, have been thrown up under cover of the trees on the river embankment, opposite Totrokan, and a good deal of ammunition has been uselessly expended by both sides. The wooden gun-boat "Shefket Numa" appears to have been well and bravely handled against the batteries.

It would have been easy to harass and seriously impede the enemy's operations during the construction of these batteries.

At Rustchuk some desultory firing is said to be going on.

The Turks have anticipated a passage at Nicopoli, where the Russians have been collecting troops.

River steamers and transports, protected by a schlip or barge on either side, took some Turkish troops up from Rustchuk; they, or one of them, when returning empty, were heavily fired on from Flamondo, but escaped serious damage. Some troops, according to the Consul, failed to pass, and were landed at Sistov. Four battalions in all have moved to Nicopoli, giving a total of six there.

The Russians have batteries at Tsluss, as well as at Flamondo. At the latter place a Turkish armoured gun-boat attacked what was thought to be preparations for embarking troops or bridging, and destroyed the steamer or tug and the one or two schlips with her. At Grabia, or Gabria, a point of possible passage near

Rahova, there were some Russian preparations; two gun-boats, one from Widin, the other from Nicopoli (from Rustchuk first), met at this point, the latter having been much fired at on her way. Owing to an island, they could not get at the schlips from a distance, and went right into the passage; they destroyed one of two small ships, the schlips, and the steamer that was placed in shore of them all for safety. The gun-boats were probably the "Podgoritza" and "Scodra." As they were leaving, a shell entered the port of one of them, killing seven men and wounding the Captain and many others, but not damaging the vessel.

A bombardment between Widin and Kalafat is reported, and an enemy's steamer to have been so damaged, as to necessitate her being run ashore; this occurred some time ago.

To sum up, there has been no military movement of importance on the Turkish side, and no real aggressive movement on the other. The Danube remains excessively high, and the points of possible passage cannot be numerous. Numerous Russian or Wallachian guns are in position on its banks.

The Turkish flotilla seems very active and efficient, but its power likely to be much, if not completely, paralized by the efficacy of the torpedo, offensive and defensive, in such waters as the Danube. Steam should be kept constantly up, but the supply of coals is small throughout, unless that at Rustchuk has been added to; even so, it would require distribution, and probably in places, as past Totrokan, to be transported by land.

The distribution of the Turkish army will be spoken of separately. No large force can be brought to bear quickly on any point at any distance from the fortresses of Shumla, Rustchuk, and Silistria. A passage in the Dobrudscha would be almost unopposed near Tsaktcha; the Roumanian banks are probably much flooded. The Turks apprehend attempted crossings at Turtokai and Nicopoli, or at both. Their dispositions for efficient resistance do not seem great.

A cordon of Mutafiz is distributed all along the Danube from the west as far as Tchernavoda, and probably beyond. A simple system of flag-signals by day and rockets by night at once gives the alarm, showing at the fortresses (as Rustchuk and Silistria) the station whence the signal emanates.

The Consul at Varna has heard that the Government has made arrangements with the Railway Company for the transport of 50,000 men to Sofia. I mention it merely, as it might be possible to obtain confirmation of it at Constantinople.

The Turks may believe that the demonstration towards Kalafat is serious, or may be merely taking praiseworthy precautions for all contingencies, or, possibly, be simply spreading the report as a blind, or the latter may be entirely incorrect.

I am, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

No. 284.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

(No. 580.) *Therapia, June* 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a despatch from Sir Arnold Kemball, accompanied by a map, and dated from the head-quarters near Bardez, giving an account of the state and position of the Turkish army in Asia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 284.

Major General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Head-Quarters Camp, near Bardez, Sunday night, May 20, 1877.

Sir,

BY the subjoined telegram, I to-day reported to your Excellency the posture of affairs in this quarter. No doubt remains of the fall of Ardahan on Thursday, the 17th instant. From the statements of fugitives collated by the authorities on the Olti road, it would seem that a portion of the garrison effected its escape to Ardanuch, but as yet no official report has reached head-quarters.

This is one instance of the utter helplessness of the Turkish commanders, not only in the matter of interchanging information between their several camps and positions, but of learning with any degree of certainty what is passing within even twenty miles of their respective centres. While the enemy are able to mask their operations by a curtain of cavalry, and push their reconnaissances without risk in every direction, the Turks are almost devoid of similar means of concealing their movements or of obtaining intelligence. Of their four regiments of regular cavalry, one, while forming a cordon of the frontier, was made prisoner by the Russians twelve hours before the declaration of war, and a second was left at Kars; of the remaining two, Moukhtar Pasha has barely 300 effective troopers at his disposal. The Circassians, he complains, are little amenable to control, and will not quit the shelter of the surrounding villages, where they have disposed themselves. His Excellency is accordingly dependent upon local horsemen, and in two instances on robber bands, whom he has bribed to do the service of scouts, but whose loyalty is not above suspicion, and whose reports, from mere ignorance of their duties, must often be misleading.

On such conditions, with a force of, say 40 battalions (24,000 men), operating over an arc of 100 miles in extent, supported by 3 batteries of field artillery and 18 small mountain guns only,* living from hand to mouth, and never assured of the morrow's rations, the attempt to stem the invasion of the well-equipped and greatly superior forces of the Russians in the open field would be ludicrous, if it did not involve such serious risks. Mouhktar Pasha admits that he is powerless to relieve Kars, did that fortress stand in need of relief (of which he professes to have no fears), that the troops under his command are unequal to the defence of the Soghanly Dagh from Pennek to Toprak Kalaa, over which mountainous tract the approaches, becoming practicable as the season grows, are far more numerous than I had been led to believe; and, finally, that his only care must be, as the enemy advances, to secure the timely retreat of his own columns upon Kinpri Keui, thence to be concentrated at Erzeroum; yet he clings, without an idea of resistance, to positions where his columns are exposed to surprise, and liable to be severally turned and intercepted, without the means of intercommunication, much less of mutual support; this, too, at a time when, if not already too late, the presence of himself and his troops is urgently needed at Erzeroum, to make provision for the defence of that place.

It is clear, indeed, that he is thus actuated against his convictions by the fear of public opinion at Constantinople, and by the secret misgiving, perhaps, that without money, munitions, and provisions, and without an amount of preparation beyond his means, Erzeroum itself must fall on the first serious assault of the Russians.

Moukhtar Pasha speaks with confidence of the impregnability of Kars, garrisoned as it is by thirty battalions, sufficiently armed with heavy guns, and, to his own knowledge, fully supplied for an eight months' siege. As regards the water supply of Kars, he believes the springs and fountains existing within the fortifications to be inadequate; but he avers that it would be impossible for the Russians to divert the course of the stream which flows through the town.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. B. KEMBALL.

Telegram.

Sunday morning.

Arrived at head-quarters, Bardez, yesterday evening. Fall of Ardahan had just been reported, two or three days after event, which not yet certified. My worst fears realized. Speedy retreat on Erzeroum inevitable. Without money, provisions, and cavalry, Mukhtar Pasha can do nothing. Arc of 100 miles from Pennek to Toprak Kalna, too extended for available forces, may be turned by many roads or cut in two. Kars, with 30 battalions, supposed to be safe against any

* With 1 field battery at Hassankalan, 60 miles distant, and 3 field batteries at Erzeroum, horsed from 3 of the 5 field batteries left in Kars, when Moukhtar Pasha retired on Bardez, the horses then being sent back to Erzeroum for that purpose; 1 battery supposed to have fallen into the hands of the Russians at Ardahan. Total, 10 field batteries, horsed.

odds. Doubt if Mukhtar Pasha will have time to make provision for defence of Erzeroum. Here very short of supplies. Artillery limited to 12 horse-batteries, of which 1 at Ardahan, 5 at Kars, 1 here, 2 at Toprak Kalna, 1 at Wassan Kalna, and 4 supposed to be at Erzeroum, also 18 mountain-guns distributed over Soghanli Dagh. Contents have been read to Mukhtar Pasha.

No. 285.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 581. Confidential.)

Therapia, June 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I MET the Grand Vizier at a dinner given yesterday by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in honour of the new German Ambassador. His Highness spoke to me under feelings of great excitement. He said that Turkey was again being treated by the Powers as she had been treated before. Her interests and her independence had been previously dealt with without her being consulted. Now the Empire was being divided between certain European States, and she was kept in complete ignorance of what was going on. The Empire was being dealt with as if it had no owner. So gross and wicked an act of injustice had never before been committed. It even exceeded the iniquitous partition of Poland. He grieved to find that England was taking part in these proceedings. He had reason to suspect that she had come to an understanding with Russia, as to what Russia might take and what she should leave, in order to satisfy British interests. Was Turkey—the old and faithful ally of England; Turkey, against whom England had no cause of complaint—to be thus treated by her? Constantinople and the Suez Canal were to be given over to her, or to be placed in her keeping, merely because it suited her interests that they should not be in the possession of Russia. As for Austria, she was openly acting with Russia, in violation of all Treaties and international law. The two Powers had come to a secret agreement to dethrone Prince Milan, and to form a new State out of Servia, Herzegovina, and Montenegro, of which the Prince of Montenegro was to be the King. The Austrian railways were supplying the Russians in Roumania with arms, munitions of war, provisions, and everything they required. In answer to the representations of the Porte, the Austrian Government had pretended to stop one or two trains thus employed; but had subsequently alleged that this open violation of neutrality was merely the same commercial traffic that was carried on by sea by the Austrian Lloyd Company. He had learnt that an Englishman, who had been for some time in Montenegro, had stated that arms and munitions of war were constantly sent into the Principality through Austria, and were landed at Cattaro with the connivance and actual help of the Austrian authorities. Count Andrassy never hesitated to express his hostility to Turkey, and there could not be a doubt that he was in the league with the Russian and German Chancellors to destroy and dismember the Turkish Empire.

His Highness went on to say that Turkey was determined to resist to the very end. The Mussulmans would either die martyrs, or defeat this infamous league against their lives and religion. Russia, from what had just occurred in Circassia and Armenia, had shown her intention to give no quarter. She did not even respect the Red Crescent, which Turkey had adopted instead of the Red Cross, and her cannon had been deliberately turned against the hospitals at Widdin, where several of the sick and wounded had been killed. Even the lowest animal was allowed to defend itself, but all the Great Powers were united to bind Turkey hand and foot, and to take from her even the most legitimate and necessary means of defence. Austria threatened her with war unless the boats and tugs on the Danube belonging to Austrian subjects, which Turkey had a right to detain, were given up, so that Russia might use them to bridge the river. Whilst Russia was allowed to obtain arms, munitions, provisions—everything, in fact, that she required, from foreign States, the most stringent regulations were put in force to prevent Turkey from doing the same. Turkey had no money, but she would fight without money. She had the most devoted and bravest soldiers in the world, and they would die rather than yield. They now knew that a crusade was being waged against their faith, and that everything that was worth living for, their religion and their country, was at stake.

His Highness concluded by saying that he could not understand the policy of England. When Turkey was crushed, when she had been turned into a desert and had become the prey of Russia, when the Mussulmans of the world had learnt that England had been a party to their extermination, England would find, when too late, what dangers she had brought upon herself in Europe and in Asia.

This, and a great deal more in the same strain, the Grand Vizier said in a very excited tone. I did not think it desirable to enter into any discussion or controversy with him in his then state of mind. I merely observed that these were matters to be dealt with calmly, and that if he had any representation to make to me to which I could properly listen, I would call upon him some morning and hear what he had to say.

Suspecting that an inaccurate version of your Lordship's letter of the 6th ultimo to Count Schouvaloff, on the latter's departure from England, might have been designedly given to his Highness, I asked him upon what grounds he made the statement that England had come to a secret understanding with Russia as to what she might or might not take of the Turkish Empire; whether he had received any communication from abroad or elsewhere that warranted it. He replied that he had no direct evidence upon the subject; but, seeing the ominous calm that reigned in the rest of Europe, whilst Russia was bringing her vast forces to overwhelm the Turkish Empire, the only conclusion that he could draw was that the other Powers had agreed amongst themselves and with Russia, as to their share of the spoils, and that they were waiting patiently for the moment when they could step in to take it. He had reason to believe, he added, that even Italy had settled what part of Turkey she was to have in the general scramble.

His Highness stated to me that the three divisions operating against Montenegro had commenced their advance the day before, and that he had every hope that they would occupy the Principality. The Porte would then have 100 battalions ready to deal with any events that might happen in Bosnia.

A good deal of what the Grand Vizier said to me may be attributed to the strong feeling of excitement under which he was evidently labouring. But I have thought it important that your Lordship should be made acquainted with the feeling that is getting up amongst the Mahommedans of this country, and which may lead to the most fatal consequences should it be further exasperated by a conviction that Russia is making the war one for the extermination of the Mussulmans.

I understood from the Grand Vizier that the Porte was inquiring into the facts as to the massacres committed by the Russians in Circassia, and the slaughter of the Circassian cavalry in Armenia, to whom, it is alleged, that no quarter was given, and as to the firing upon the Red Crescent, with a view to sending a Circular on these subjects to the European Powers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 286.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 582.)

Therapia, June 6, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 515 of the 25th ultimo, I am informed that stringent orders have been addressed to the Governor-General of Janina with a view to the recapture of the Greek brigands who recently escaped from that place. As they appear as yet not to have crossed the frontier into Greece it is hoped that this may still be effected.

I nevertheless directed Mr. Sandison again to point out to Safvet Pasha the desirability of removing Hussin Pasha from his post, but his Excellency seems now to apprehend some opposition to this on the part of his colleagues, who, he fears, may think such a measure too severe in view of the probability of the Vali's effecting the recapture of the brigands.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 287.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 583. Confidential.)

Therapia, June 6, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship the inclosed remarks from General Sir Collingwood Dickson upon reports received from Colonel Lennox and Sir Arnold Kemball.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 287.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

Therapia, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAD the honour to address your Excellency on the 28th May last, and in that communication I offered some remarks and opinions upon the letters and reports received up to that date from Colonel Lennox and Lieutenant Chermside on the Danube and Dobrudja defences. Yesterday I perused a report from Colonel Lennox, dated Shumla, 1st instant, addressed to you, and as it will, I believe, be sent home to-day, I will merely make a few remarks upon its contents. In the first place, I have drawn up from it, and from a private letter received from Colonel Lennox, a short Memorandum of various military and engineering requirements for the improvement of the Turkish means of defence in their fortresses and works on the Danube, many of which are of vital importance; and I venture to propose that this Memorandum, unsigned and non-official, should be placed in the hands of the Turkish Minister of War, and in a private interview I can quietly urge upon him the absolute necessity of endeavouring to supply these wants without delay. These various points include alterations and improvements in works of defence easily made, but of importance, proper supply of ammunition for the artillery in all the strong places, supplying coal for service of Turkish gunboats on the Danube, absolutely necessary, repair and improvement of roads and bridges, and taking immediate steps for watching and guarding the telegraphs, to prevent wires being cut or damaged by traitorous persons. To the above I have added a few recommendations concerning the fortifications of Pravadi, for providing a proper line of defence between Shumla and Varna for a corps d'armée resisting the advance of an enemy upon the Balkans, and also urging the necessity of providing a second line of defence behind the Balkans, between Bourgas and Adrianople. I append herewith a state of the strength of the Turkish army of Bulgaria, furnished in a private letter from Lieutenant Chermside, R.E. I find that Colonel Lennox speaks of the loose way in which the Turkish army is brigaded. He and Lieutenant Chermside mention that they have almost never, or very rarely, seen any other drill than single battalion manœuvres, but not by brigades. This will be quietly pointed out to the Seraskier. Its neglect endangers the safety of the army in the open field, as it cannot be trusted to work or manœuvre against a disciplined enemy under the present loose system of military organization. I have also received various reports from Her Majesty's Consuls announcing the conversion of the mounted police (zaptiehs), both in Asia and Europe, into cavalry. (The Turkish army is peculiarly weak in this arm.) These men will be of great use, as they are to a certain extent accustomed to discipline, and will be most useful auxiliaries to the small force of regular cavalry for many purposes—keeping open communications, reconnoitring, &c. I believe several thousands of these men have been sent to the armies in Asia or Europe. Upwards of 1,000 have been sent from the Vilayet of Adrianople alone, and many of them are described as exceedingly well mounted and armed.

As regards affairs on the side of Erzeroum, I regret to find by Major-General Sir A. Kemball's letters and despatches up to 24th ultimo, and by late telegrams from him and Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, that the Russians are steadily advancing, and that Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha's army is falling back upon the neighbourhood of Erzeroum. The Soghanli Dagh positions appear to have been abandoned, and it only remains now for the Turkish army to endeavour to keep the enemy in check, whilst it concentrates itself round the strong positions about Erzeroum, where, if the works of defence upon them have been constructed and armed, a successful stand might yet be made by an army determined to resist to the last. The latest accounts furnished by Sir A. Kemball state Ahmed Mukhtar's army to amount to about 40 battalions (24,000 men), with only 3 batteries (18 guns) of field artillery, and 18 mountain guns; this force has also only two regiments of cavalry, probably not giving a strength of more than 700 or 800 horsemen in all, if so many. The Russians have a numerous cavalry, and a force of field artillery far outnumbering that of the Turks. I understand that many heavy guns and also field pieces, with sufficient ammunition, have already arrived at Erzeroum from Trebizond; if these can be got into position in the works, and should horses be found for the field guns, the Turks will be in a better position of defence. I hear also that the division from Van has been withdrawn from that place and sent to Erzeroum (probably about 5,000 men); and from Trebizond I received reports that nearly 15,000 men (principally Mustaphiz) have been landed at that place, and that nearly 10,000 of them, all in uniforms, and armed with Snider rifles, had gone on to Erzeroum nearly a fortnight ago, and must, long ere this, be at that place. The arrival of the troops must have greatly augmented the Turkish forces, so that they ought to have at least nearly 40,000 men in and around Erzeroum. Such a force, well commanded, ought to be capable of defending Erzeroum. I mention the above facts hoping that the Turkish army may yet be able to resist the onward advance of the Russians; but I fear greatly it may be too late for much to be done beyond delaying the enemy. Even this would be a great thing, could other troops be sent up to reinforce them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General, Military Attaché.*

APPENDIX.

	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.
Widin	55	6	11
Sistova and Nicopolis	8	7 11	7 5
Rustchuk	32	..	7
Silistria	23	4	9½
Turtokai	6	1	1½
Shumla	39	30	22
Tirnova	3	..	..
Dobrudscha	8	2	7 2½
Varna	12	..	3
Sofia and Nisch	25	12	7
Bulgaria—			
Aidos Jamboli	15	..	..
	226	72	62

Some at Plevna and of Tschn, &c.

	No.
Infantry, 230 (say) battalions	102,200
Cavalry	4,800
Field Artillery	0,820
Engineers	1,100
Fortress Artillery	3,000
	180,020
Mustahfiz	14,000
Total	194,920

No. 288.

Consul-General Stanley to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 28. Political.)

Odessa, June 8, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose extract from a despatch I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Webster, and which I have embodied in my Commercial report.

The intelligence given, though chiefly of a commercial nature, has also a political sense, as being the consequence of the present state of war.

I have therefore ventured to send this extract in my Political series.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. E. STANLEY.

Inclosure in No. 288.

Vice-Consul Webster to Consul General Stanley.

(Extract.)

ON the 17th ultimo the export trade from South Russia by sea ceased.

From the 3rd to the 17th the price of Ghirca wheat at Nicolaief rose to 16 r. per chetvert of 10 poods, equivalent at exchange of 9 r. 30 c. per 1*l.* to 2*l.* 7*s.* 10*d.* per quarter of 492 lbs. English.

Rye rose to 9 r. 30 c. per chetvert, equivalent to 1*l.* 7*s.* 9*d.* per quarter.

During the fortnight preceding the blockade all was bustle and excitement at Kherson, whence about 100,000 quarters of grain were shipped to Nicolaief for exportation; all is calm again; wheat has fallen 50 per cent., and rye 30 per cent.

Financially speaking the affairs of this country were bad enough before the declaration of war; but the position of the landowners, farmers, and peasants will be deplorable if they cannot sell their agricultural produce next autumn as seems probable, the price not being high enough to pay for the freight by rail to Königsberg.

They no longer consider it a disgrace to allow their bills to be dishonoured, and if the war continues it is hinted that payments in Southern Russia will be suspended by law. Complaints reach us from the north that the cotton, cloth, and other mills have no work, and that everybody is drifting to bankruptcy.

Generally speaking the country is suffering from the following causes:—

1. The blockade of the southern ports.

2. The difficulty of doing a regular business with abroad with such fluctuating rates of exchange.

3. The impossibility of carrying on trade on credit in a country where the rate of discount depends on the fancy of the Director of the State Bank acting under the orders of the Minister of Finance, and totally at variance with the state of the money market.

4. The uncertainty of industrial enterprise and manufacture with a falling rouble. Some manufacturers complain bitterly of the Minister of Finance having changed the Customs Tariff. (These are doubtless they who import cotton yarns.)

People who have money are adverse to investing in funds which fluctuate so much in value, and very often only in consequence of new regulations emanating from the Minister of Finance.

Odessa is suffering from the want of fuel, and English, Scotch, and Welsh coal, which was sold at Odessa two months ago at 25*s.* to 30*s.* a-ton, has nearly doubled in price.

A bituminous coal like English smithy coal costs at Kherson brought from Bakhmout via Alexandrovsk on the Dneiper 24 copecks per pood, equal at 9 r. 40 c. to 1*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.* per ton, but being a small coal it is not well suited for steam purposes, and burns much faster than English coal. To send this coal to Nicolaief by water, and from thence to Odessa on carts, would cost, at least, 16 copecks a pood, or 16*s.* 10*d.* a ton.

In merino wools, of which large quantities are produced in the Government of Kherson and Taurida, the Moscow merchants have scarcely done any business this year. Large quantities have been bought by the Odessa firms, and will be sent abroad by rail via Nicolaief, Elisabethgrad, and Volochisk, or by rail from Nicolaief to Königsberg, thence by sea to Hâvre.

Had no blockade existed this would have been shipped by steamer from Odessa.

The merino wool from South Russia is generally sent to the Austrian or north of France markets. England takes but little, as the South Russian wool cannot compete with Australian wool either in price or quality.

No. 289.

Prince Gortchakow to Count Schouvaloff.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Count Schouvaloff, June 14.)

(Télégraphique.)

APRÈS un mûr examen de la situation sur place le Prince Gortchakow communique à l'Ambassadeur de Russie que la séparation de la Bulgarie en deux provinces serait impraticable.

Les renseignements locaux prouvent que la Bulgarie doit rester une province sans quoi la partie la plus laborieuse et la plus intelligente de la population Bulgare resterait en dehors des institutions autonomes et notamment celle qui a le plus souffert de la mauvaise administration de la Turquie.

No. 290.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 164.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.) *Therapia, June 13, 1877, 1·10 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, in my judgment Porte would not consent to the terms suggested to your Lordship by the Russian Ambassador. It could only see in them the dismemberment and annihilation of the Turkish Empire, and I am convinced that no Turkish Minister would dare to listen to them unless Turkey were utterly prostrate and Russian armies at the gates of Constantinople. It would, moreover, I think, be very dangerous at this moment even to suggest them to the Porte or to the Sultan. The secret would not be kept, and there is a party in the Palace which would at once make use of the information to drive the country into measures of despair, which might have the most fatal consequences, and might result in very gravely compromising the interests of England. Of course, if Her Majesty's Government desire, I will sound the Sultan or his Ministers upon the subject, but I venture earnestly to advise that this should not be done—at any rate at the present time.

No. 291.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June 13, 1877, 10·30 P.M.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY has just returned from the Russian head-quarters, where he waited upon the Grand Duke Nicholas. His Imperial Highness received him in the most extraordinary manner, and used such unmeasured language, that it seems almost impossible that he should accompany the Russian army. The Grand Duke stated that he would be narrowly watched, and that if his conduct was in any way reprehensible, he would be immediately expelled from the camp.

Colonel Wellesley reports in further detail by post, and will await your Lordship's instructions at Bucharest.

No. 292.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 165.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 14, 1877, noon.*

SIR ARNOLD KEMBALL telegraphs from Khorassan, dated Sunday evening:—

"Attack on Kars has not come off, but is still daily expected. Russians have established themselves in force on the west side towards Ardahan. Sortie had harassed Russians on their flank march. Olti has been again occupied by Turks, with their outposts. Russians retired on approach of Turkish detachments, which were converging on Olti from Moukhtar Pasha's camp, and from Hinlz. Captains

McCalmont and Trotter are with these detachments. Commander-in-chief has ordered eight battalions from Delibaba to resume position at Getshewan. They retired, he says, without permission. I think, nevertheless, their concentration at Delibaba an advisable movement which, sooner or later, must be adopted because Mullah Suleiman easily turned, and not so easily supported. If Kars holds out, and Porte continues to comply with Moukhtar Pasha's requests for money and efficient agents prospects in this quarter will improve."

No. 293.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, June 14, 1877, 3·30 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT is not desirable that anything should be said to the Turkish Government as to the Russian conditions of peace. They were communicated only for your personal information and opinion.

No. 294.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1877, 5·45 P.M.
(Most Confidential.)

WITH reference to previous communications as to proposed Russian terms of peace, Prince Gortchakow has now telegraphed to Russian Ambassador here that information on the spot shows that Bulgaria cannot be divided into two provinces, as such an arrangement would exclude from the autonomous institutions the most industrious and intelligent part of the population, and that which had most suffered from Turkish misrule.

I have told Count Schouvaloff, as my personal opinion, that, in my judgment, the Turkish Government were not likely to have accepted the terms as first proposed except under pressure of absolute necessity, and that this important modification made acceptance still more improbable.

The above for your own information only.

No. 295.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

Bucharest, June 14, 1877, 1 P.M.

(Telegraphic.)

IT is reported that the Turkish batteries have caused very serious damage to the Russian bridging preparations at the mouth of the Aluta.

No. 296.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 14.)

Belgrade, June 14, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PRINCE of Servia and his Foreign Minister have just left on their visit to Bucharest and Ployesti.

No. 297.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 190.) *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 515 of the 25th ultimo, on the subject of the escape of certain Greek brigands, whom the Governor of Janina had undertaken to keep in confinement or under surveillance, has been received, and I have to state to you

that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings in this matter, as well as the language which you held to the Sultan, pointing out to His Majesty how important it is, under present circumstances, that the Porte should not give any cause of quarrel to Greece.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 298.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 195. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch No. 535, Very Confidential, of the 29th ultimo, reporting that the Porte has been informed that M. Coumoundouros, the present Greek Representative at Constantinople, is likely to be recalled, and replaced by M. Zaimis, who is said to be hostile to Turkey, I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve the advice which you have pressed upon the Porte to avoid doing anything which may give rise to difficulties with Greece.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 299.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 197. Confidential.) *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 514, Confidential, of the 25th ultimo, reporting your endeavours to bring about an amicable settlement of the questions now pending between the Turkish and Persian Governments; and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 300.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard *

(No. 201A. Most Confidential.) *Foreign Office, June* 14, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR Excellency is aware of the nature of the Russian terms of peace, as they have been represented to me by Count Schouvaloff. I now learn that an important alteration has been made in them. Prince Gortchakow has telegraphed to Count Schouvaloff that it is shown by information collected on the spot that the division of Bulgaria into two provinces is impossible, as by such an arrangement the most industrious and intelligent part of the population, and that which had most reason to complain of Turkish misrule, would be excluded from the advantages of autonomous institutions.

I have stated to Count Schouvaloff, as my personal opinion, that it was, in my judgment, improbable that the Porte would have accepted the terms in their original form unless they should have been compelled to do so by the pressure of absolute necessity; and that I need hardly say, that I considered that a modification of such importance would materially increase the improbability of their acceptance.

The above is for your Excellency's information only.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

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* A similar despatch was addressed to Sir A. Buchanan, with the following alteration in the last paragraph:—"You are at liberty to communicate the substance of this despatch privately to Count Andrassy."

No. 301.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 246. Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 14, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Ambassador called upon me this afternoon, and communicated to me the substance of a telegram which he had received from Prince Gortchakow to the following effect:—

After a mature examination of the situation on the spot, Prince Gortchakow had come to the conclusion that the separation of Bulgaria into two provinces would be impracticable. Local information proved that Bulgaria must remain a single province, otherwise the most laborious and intelligent part of the Bulgarian population, and notably that which had most suffered from Turkish maladministration, would remain excluded from the autonomous institutions.

Some conversation ensued, in the course of which I told Count Schouvaloff, but as a personal opinion only, that in my judgment the Turkish Government were not likely to have accepted the terms proposed in the first instance, except under absolute pressure of necessity, and that the very important modification now introduced rendered their acceptance still more improbable.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 302.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(Decypher.)
(No. 90.)
Tiflis, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

IT is worthy of notice that 4 battalions of the 151st Regiment of the 38th Division, and 1 battery of the same division, arrived yesterday at Tiflis. They are those mentioned in despatch No. 58. Two battalions of reserve grenadiers, each 4,000 strong, arrived here yesterday from Manglis. The Ossetes Christians are said to be in revolt. The Tpreschechenzes are still in revolt. Such is the disturbed state of the country that the Grand Duke is, I am told, unable to leave Tiflis. My informant thinks Kars will not be attacked until Grand Duke is able to go there, but it is not easy to say anything definite on this matter. If the Turks are able to supply mountaineers with proper arms and ammunition and officers, the revolt will gain ground, and become dangerous to Russia. Should this be impossible, much slaughter will be caused uselessly, the Russians having, I am told, been ordered to destroy men, women, and children in the revolted districts. The mountaineers altogether could probably bring, in different places, into the field some 80,000 fighting men. In the meantime, if the Turkish army obtains any decided success, the Russian situation in the Caucasus will be very critical.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. T. RICKETTS.

No. 303.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(Telegraphic.)
Scutari, June 14, 1877.

REPORT of the revictualling of Nichsich by Suleiman Pasha not yet officially confirmed.

Information from Montenegro admits serious Montenegrin defeat at Kristaeh.

Fighting reported to-day at Spuz. Result unknown.

Telegraphed to Constantinople.

No. 304.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 166.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 14, 1877, 2 P.M.

SIR A. KEMBALL telegraphs following, dated Sunday evening:—

"If Erzeroum were adequately stored with provisions and ammunition, and supposing that the guns had arrived from Trebizond, Mouktar Pasha ought to be able, with his present force, to defend Erzeroum. Soghanlee Dagh has been already virtually abandoned, and owing to deficiency of cavalry and artillery Turkish forces must retire on Erzeroum when Russians advance.

"Authorities of Erzeroum ought to be urged to strengthen and render effectual the very light field works they are constructing on the Doveh Boyun and Gurgieh Baghazi position."

No. 305.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 167.)
(Telegraphic.)
(Most Confidential.)
Constantinople, June 15, 1877, 10·30 A.M.

YOU may be quite sure that not a word will be said by me about Russian conditions; it would be, in my opinion, most dangerous even to hint them to the Porte. I have written with reference to this by last messenger. I will write again.

No. 306.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 15.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)
Bucharest, June 15, 1877, 11·50 A.M.

TYPHUS has broken out among the Russian troops. Four patients were yesterday placed in the Bucharest hospitals which had been prepared for the wounded.

No. 307.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 204.)
Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 563 of the 1st instant, reporting a conversation which you held with the Grand Vizier in regard to the position of the Protestant community in Turkey.

Your language on the subject is entirely approved, and I have to request your Excellency to express to the Grand Vizier the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the assurances of protection and encouragement of the Protestants given by his Highness.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 308.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 205.)
Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 566 of the 2nd instant, forwarding a copy of the note which you addressed to Safvet Pasha on the 1st of June, in regard to the freedom of the navigation of the Danube, and explaining the circumstances under which you had previously made a verbal communication to the Porte on

the subject; and I have to state to you that your proceedings in the matter are approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 309.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(No. 38. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.*

ON receipt of your Excellency's despatch No. 103, Political, of the 26th ultimo, forwarding copy of a note from the Moldo-Wallachian Minister for Foreign Affairs, calling attention to the reckless manner in which the Turkish military authorities were said to be laying torpedoes in the bed of the Danube, I lost no time in instructing Mr. Layard, by telegraph, to urge upon the Porte the propriety of taking proper precautions so as to allow of the removal of the torpedoes after the termination of hostilities; and I have now to inform you that the Turkish Minister of Marine has assured Mr. Layard that the positions where torpedoes have been placed in the Danube have been carefully marked, in order that they may be removed when no longer required.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 310.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 5. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 27 of the 27th ultimo, I have to state to you that I approve your having instructed the British Vice-Consul in Candia to investigate upon the spot the circumstances of an outrage lately perpetrated by some Turkish soldiers at a village eight hours to the east of Candia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 311.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 6.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 25 of the 25th ultimo, reporting the visit of congratulation which you received on the occasion of the anniversary of Her Majesty's birthday from the Christian Deputies of the General Assembly, and I have to state to you that I approve the language which you held to them on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 312.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Zohrab.

(No. 6. Political.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 43 of May 17, reporting the disorderly conduct of the Circassian troops in the town and province of Erzeroum, and I approve your having called the serious attention of the Governor-General to this subject, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 313.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Reade.

(No. 4.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 7, Political, of the 22nd of May, forwarding copy of a despatch of the same date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of certain outrages in the Vilayet of Rustchuck, and I have to convey to you my approval of your proceedings as reported therein.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 314.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 15. Political.)
My Lord, *Aleppo, May 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of to-day's date to Mr. Layard, relative to the enrolling of volunteers, and the state of public feeling in this province with regard to the war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 314.

Consul Skene to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Aleppo, May 26, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that 2,000 mounted volunteers are being enrolled in this province, 1,500 piastres being given to each for the purchase of a horse and arms; the whole 3,000,000 piastres to be levied from all classes of the population by assessment.

These volunteers are to proceed to Erzeroom by land, with the police force of this province, numbering about 2,000, whose duties here will be performed by the 2nd Reserve (Mustahfiz).

There have been many recent cases of soldiers of the reserve deserting on the roads, or rather of their officers taking money from them to let them return to their homes, and I have reason to believe that most of the volunteers have accepted the conditions offered to them, with the sole view of receiving horses and arms gratis, and that the police force will also be greatly reduced by desertions before appearing in the field.

In this part of Turkey there is a strong feeling against the war which has commenced, and it arises apparently from the heavy burdens imposed on the people for the purpose of supplying the means of carrying it on, which burdens are aggravated by corrupt collection. Transport is required, for instance, and many more animals are seized than are wanted, the surplus number being liberated on the payment of a gratuity to the police officers who seize them. Forced loans are raised, and arbitrary assessments made, their distribution depending on favour obtained by the rich through bribery, while the poor are left to meet the increased demand, or go to prison. Trade is ruined, and work cannot be found to enable them to contribute anything, their daily food being unprovided for. Starvation is beginning to appear, and the families of those who have been sent to defend the frontiers live by begging. A subscription has been raised by the European residents to assist in feeding them, at the request of the Governor-General. Robberies, meanwhile, are becoming more and more frequent, unchecked by the local authorities, and resorted to as the only available means of subsistence by unemployed Mussulman operatives, who commit also other offences, as in the case of the Spanish Consul's wife, and the French Consul's daughter, who were insulted in the streets last week. In such a state of matters it cannot be expected that a war, which has so completely disorganized the prosperity and tranquillity of the population, should be popular, or that the temptation to receive a bounty without serving for it should be resisted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 315.

Consul Skene to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 16.)

(No. 15. Consular.)

Aleppo, May 29, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of to-day's date to Mr. Layard, applying for an inquiry into the circumstances of the acquittal of the murderers of the Cavass of this Consulate, Ibrahim Kubevar.

I beg leave to explain that, although his son, Khalid Kubevar, is not entitled to British protection, I have thought it right to include the circumstances of his condemnation to death in my application on account of their having been the means employed to facilitate the acquittal of his father's murderers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

Inclosure in No. 315.

Consul Skene to Mr. Layard.

Aleppo, May 29, 1877.

Sir,

ADVERTING to my despatch of the 20th February last, I have the honour to request your Excellency to move the Porte to institute an inquiry, with the co-operation of a representative of this Consulate, into the acquittal of the murderers of the British Cavass, Ibrahim Kubevar, and the condemnation of his son to death, under the following circumstances:—

It is believed here that the Police Department and the Criminal Court have been bribed by the relatives of the murderers. Every possible obstacle has accordingly been raised to the effecting of the arrestations, and to the taking of evidence. Two witnesses deposed, in the presence of a dragoman of this Consulate, that they had seen the Cavass stabbed by the prisoners, who were nevertheless acquitted, and have been set at liberty to-day. Two other ocular witnesses had been proposed by name, but they were not called by the Court to give their evidence.

Shortly after the trial had commenced, another murder was committed in the same quarter of the town. A Moslem girl had threatened to denounce to her uncle, who is a man of good family, the dissolute habits of her aunt, and the girl was strangled in the harem. The aunt, her mother, and her step-daughter, who were its only inmates, were put on their trial, and were induced, by the relatives of the murderers of Ibrahim Kubevar, to accuse his son Khalid, a lad of seventeen, who was actively engaged in bringing those murderers to justice as prosecutor, according to Mussulman law (davadji). He was arrested, and the trial of his father's murderers was set aside until this new case was closed, by the condemnation to death of the son on the evidence of those previously accused, which is a proceeding unknown to Mussulman law, and by the acquittal of the women and two men who had been tried as accessories after the fact. A proposal had been made to Khalid by the relatives of his father's murderers to withdraw the charge brought against him on condition of the charge brought against them being withdrawn, which he rejected.

I regret exceedingly to have to report such iniquitous conduct on the part of officers of the provincial Government, regarding which I have had repeated conversations with the Governor-General. At first he seemed disposed to be active in the discharge of his duty in this case; but he soon became utterly passive in the hands of his subordinates, and the only answer I could obtain from him was, that the son had been proved guilty, and that the father's murderers had not been proved guilty. I feel fully convinced of the contrary in both instances, and I believe the same opinion is held by every one else in Aleppo, to the great detriment of the respect due to the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. H. SKENE.

No. 316.

Consul Sandwith to Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 16.)

(No. 29. Political.)

Canea, Crete, June 2, 1877.

My Lord,

REFERRING to my despatch No. 27 of the 27th ultimo, your Lordship will have received the cyphered telegram which I had the honour to send on the 29th, reporting the profanation by Turkish troops of a Christian church near Candia. Believing that the news had been already telegraphed to England, and that it might appear in the newspapers, I thought it advisable to inform your Lordship of the circumstance at once. Full details of the affair will be given by Vice-Consul Calocherinos, in the report which your Lordship should receive by the same post which conveys this. I hear that the Brigadier-General at Candia has sent an aide-de-camp to investigate the conduct of the troops.

The Vice-Consul in Rethymo reports the blameworthy conduct of the Redifs stationed in that town. He says a number of them surrounded the Christian school, and when the master came out, followed him to his house, hustling him in the street, and using insulting language. Girls and boys leaving school have been similarly abused. The soldiers in this town behave with propriety, but I regret to observe an increase of ill-feeling between the two religious communities. Many of those who formerly saluted each other in the streets now cease to do so, the Christian members of the General Assembly being special objects of aversion to the Mussulmans, and the feeling is, of course, fully reciprocated.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—I made a second appeal to Samih Pasha to release the six dyers, of whose imprisonment I spoke in a former communication, and his Excellency at last consented to do so on their finding sureties for meeting the claim against them, should the Porte insist on its payment, and the men are now at liberty.

T. B. S.

No. 317.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 16.)

(No. 30. Political. Confidential.)

Canea, Crete, June 4, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the leading Christian members of the General Assembly, and several of the more prominent Chiefs, met on Sunday the 27th ultimo, being the Greek Trinity Sunday, at the large convent dedicated to the Holy Trinity, two hours' distant from here, for the purpose of concerting measures for future action. The authorities being apprized of their intention, sent the Chief of Police with a body of men to the convent to watch their proceedings, but the Chiefs were beforehand with them, and held their meeting before daylight. Some of the Chiefs, I am told, were for at once beginning hostilities, but more prudent counsels ultimately prevailed, and it was finally resolved that the Deputies would wait two or three more weeks for the answer from the Porte to their demands, and that if, at the end of that time, a favourable reply should not be forthcoming, and no unforeseen check to the Russian arms should occur in the interval, they would return to their homes, and in concert with the Chiefs, get up an armed demonstration and put forth a protest. In that case they count upon the bulk of the Christian population in this part of the island to rally round them.

I ought to add, that the authorities, though they know the meeting took place, are not aware of the decision arrived at, and it was communicated to me under promise of secrecy, with the understanding, however, that I might report it to my Government.

On the evening of Trinity Sunday a peasant came to my house in the country with a message from the leading Cretan Chief, saying that he desired permission to come to see me that night. I bid the man tell the Chief that I declined to see him by night, but that if he had anything of importance to impart to me I would receive him the next morning at my office. It seems, however, that he thought it more prudent to communicate what he had to say to the Vice-Consul, who, as an old-established inha-

bitant, is known to everybody, and to him he made the following statement:—He said, that in 1868, just before the last insurrection finally broke down, he was in Athens co-operating with the Committee in the work of Cretan emancipation, and before leaving, he called on the Ministers of the three Protecting Powers. Mr. Erskine, the then British Minister, asked him what the aspirations of the Cretans were, to which he replied that they wished to be united to their mother, that is, to Greece, instead of remaining under a foreign rule. The Minister expressed his fears that there was little hope of their realizing this, and asked him what benefit the Ionian Islands had derived from union with Greece, adding, "Why don't you try to be united to Great Britain?" The Chief said this suggestion sank deep into his mind, and on his return to Crete he broached it to several of his comrades, but found that they were too far committed to the former policy to draw back so late in the day. The insurrection was suppressed, but the idea of Mr. Erskine had never ceased, he said, to work in his brain, and he could not believe that a person in his Excellency's high and responsible position would have thrown out that hint without having the authority of his Government for doing so. His object now was, he continued, in narrating this conversation, to find out whether Her Majesty's Government would not accept the loyalty of an entire people who desired nothing so ardently as to be under its powerful protection, and so to be delivered for ever from Turkish rule.

I sent word to the old man that I knew nothing as to what were Mr. Erskine's instructions, but that mine were precise and formal, and gave me no warrant for encouraging the idea he had just set forth.

Your Lordship will see from this and from former statements of mine that the Cretans are rallying more and more to the idea of demanding to be placed under the protection of Great Britain. The Greek party is gradually losing its importance, and when the insurrection breaks out, as I have little doubt it will do within a month from this date, I quite expect that there will be an almost unanimous call from the people for the English to come and rule over them. Everything points to that conclusion, in spite of the assiduous efforts of a few Greek and Russian partizans to stem the tide that has long been setting in in favour of a political connection with England.

As your Lordship is aware, from several previous despatches of mine on this subject, I have always unflinchingly told every one inquiring of me whether Her Majesty's Government would favour this latest manifestation of popular feeling, that my instructions gave me no reason to think that they would, as they were conceived in an entirely opposite sense, viz., the maintenance of Turkish rule in Crete. So persistently have I been besieged by Chiefs and leaders of influence with the hope of drawing from me one word in support of their scheme, that I have little doubt that had I allowed a single expression to escape my lips which could be construed into an encouragement of their dream of a Principality under English protection, the island would long before this have risen in insurrection.

The spontaneity of the present movement is therefore incontestable; and the language used on this subject by the Vice-Consuls under me, both here, in Rethymo, and in Candia, has been strictly in conformity with my own. Had it been otherwise, their words would have been eagerly caught up and brought to me for confirmation; but the local Government has never pretended that they were guilty of undermining its authority.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—I find that what I state in the beginning of this despatch as to the resolution arrived at at the meeting in the convent is more generally known than I had supposed.

T. B. S.

No. 318.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 501. Very Confidential.)
Paris, June 15, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me the evening before last that Prince Hohenlohe, the German Ambassador here, had come to him and said that with reference to reports which had been spread in various parts of Europe, he was instructed to take every opportunity of declaring positively that under no circumstances would Germany attempt to annex to herself the German Provinces of Austria, nor seek in any way to aggrandize herself at the expense of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Your Lordship will at once surmise that the Duc Decazes suggested to me that the inference to be drawn was, that it was to the acquisition of Holland that the ambition of Prince Bismarck must be directed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 319.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 169.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 16, 1877, 11·10 A.M.*

AUSTRIAN Ambassador informs me that he has communicated to Porte the assurances which his Government has received from the Emperor of Russia that the visit of Prince Milan will in no way influence his determination to insist that the Prince shall not take part in the war against Turkey.

Porte expresses itself much offended by what it considers a violation of the Treaty recently concluded with Servia, and an ill-return for the generous forbearance with which it treated her, and more especially by Prince Milan also visiting the Prince Charles of Roumania, whom it considers a rebel to the Sultan.

No. 320.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 170.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 16, 1877, noon.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 12th instant, Porte will not formally consent to Danube Commission not flying Turkish flag, as it attaches great importance to matter, but it hints confidentially that there is no reason why the Commission should not fly its own flag without the Turkish, when there is no Turkish authority near authorized to interfere with it. I have mentioned the subject to the Austrian Ambassador, who tells me that his Government have accepted the explanations of the Porte, and allowed the matter to drop.

Please inform Colonel Siborne.

No. 321.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 203.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 16, 1877.*

I TRANSMIT to you herewith a copy of a Russian circular,* calling attention to the stoppage by the Porte of telegraphic communication by the Odessa-Constantinople line, and suggesting that the Porte might be induced to permit the circulation of private messages; and I have to request that you will communicate the substance of this circular informally to the Turkish Government, and ascertain how far they may be disposed to act upon the suggestions of the Russian Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 322.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 169. Political.)
My Lord, *Cairo, June 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 154, Political, of the 31st ultimo, explaining the delay in the departure of Prince Hassan and the Egyptian contingent for Turkey,

* No. 33.

I have the honour to report that a Turkish iron-clad and two or three wooden frigates are expected at Alexandria within the next day or two to escort the expedition, which will probably start towards the beginning of next week.

Rumours are afloat that there are several Russian men-of-war in the Mediterranean, and it is not thought improbable that they will endeavour to intercept the Egyptian expedition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 323.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 114.)
My Lord, *Athens June 9, 1877.*

AS I did not find M. Tricoupi at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs yesterday, he had the kindness to call upon me this forenoon.

I told him that I had been anxious to see him, having heard, both by letter and telegraph, from Mr. Layard that the Porte apprehended early hostilities on the part of Greece, and wishing to learn directly from him whether there were any real grounds for such apprehensions.

Mr. Tricoupi appeared rather surprised that the Porte should have attributed hostile intentions to the new Hellenic Government, as Photiades Bey had yesterday been instructed to express the satisfaction and confidence which had been felt at the Porte on the formation of so strong and efficient a Government here.

He assured me that it would be the object of the Government to observe its international duties towards Turkey with scrupulous care; that there was no present question of the Hellenic army crossing the frontier; that the departure of irregular bands or expeditions for that purpose would be prevented; and that no assistance or encouragement would be given from hence with a view to promote insurrectionary movements in Crete or in the Hellenic provinces of Turkey, although he could not undertake to say that individuals might not occasionally succeed in evading the vigilance of the Government and in smuggling arms here and there into Turkey.

On the other hand, he asserted that it was absolutely necessary for Greece to endeavour to prepare herself by reasonable military preparations for any emergency in which she might suddenly find herself placed, and that it was her right, as well as her duty, to do so.

M. Tricoupi went on to say that whilst Greece would perform her duties in the manner which he had indicated, provided no unforeseen incident should force her to assume a different attitude, he did not consider that the Hellenic Government was bound to go out of its way to prevent the outbreak of insurrectionary movements amongst the Hellenic subjects of Turkey, should it believe that such movements would conduce to the ultimate or to the general interests of Hellenism. The Hellenic Government would, nevertheless, be prepared to exert all its influence with that object, and to be entirely guided by the advice of Her Majesty's Government in that and in all other matters of its foreign policy, if it could obtain authority from Her Majesty's Government to assure the Hellenic populations that their interests would not suffer, at the conclusion of peace, in consequence of their having now abstained from resorting to insurrection.

To put the case in a few words, M. Tricoupi undertakes to go beyond the international duties which can strictly be required of Greece, and to endeavour to prevent outbreaks in the neighbouring provinces, upon condition of obtaining a promise from Great Britain that when the time comes for entering upon negotiations for peace, over which Her Majesty's Government may be expected to exercise considerable control, it will be considered that there is an Hellenic question before Europe, no less than if such an Hellenic question had been raised by the actual insurrection of all the Hellenic provinces.

In the absence of any certainty upon this point, it is the conclusion of peace, rather than the continuance and extension of the present war, which is most dreaded in this country; and difficult as it may be for Her Majesty's Government to enter into any engagements of the nature desired until the course of the war and its probable results become more clearly developed, it may be worth your Lordship's while to consider how far it may be possible to comply with the wishes of the Hellenic Government, with a view to localise the war, to prevent the unnecessary effusion of

Christian blood, and to secure for the Hellenic race a position of equality with their Slavonic neighbours.

The position of Greece will otherwise be, perhaps, more difficult than that of any other nation affected by the war; independently of the aspirations of her people for an accession of provinces which they deem to be their rightful inheritance, she could not submit inactively to the increased degradation and suffering to which the populations of those provinces would be subjected, if they should be abandoned to their fate, whilst the Slav provinces obtained special privileges or were placed under the special protection of the European Powers. An Hellenic question will then certainly arise, unless Her Majesty's Government will admit that it already exists, and that, in the settlement of other collateral questions, it will not be ignored.

M. Tricoupi expressed his confidence that the influence of the Government would be able to postpone any outbreak, unless one should be caused by some unforeseen incidents, until there is time for me to receive an answer from your Lordship to his present overtures; and I inferred that after allowing a reasonable interval for that purpose, he would feel at liberty to suspend the restrictive action of the Government and to leave the Hellenic populations to act in accordance with their instincts, if it should then appear that the cause of Hellenism was likely to be thereby advanced.

It is scarcely necessary for me to state that in the event of any insurrectionary outbreaks or of Ottoman atrocities in the Hellenic provinces, or in Crete, the Kingdom of Greece could not well fail, however unprepared it may be, to be speedily involved in war with Turkey; and in the present disturbed and disordered state of the Ottoman side of the frontier, unforeseen incidents of either kind might occur at any time.

However inconvenient it may be to your Lordship to give an early answer to M. Tricoupi, I am sure that in so far as the difficulties and the necessities of Greece are concerned, his overtures are by no means premature, and that it is of urgent importance for the Hellenic Government to be informed whether Her Majesty's Government will be prepared to grant the assistance and support which he claims for Hellenic interests.

I may add that the whole Greek nation turns its eyes towards England and wishes to adapt its policy to that of England in the present crisis. M. Coumoundouros called upon me on Sunday last, when he was Prime Minister, to say that Greece wished to place herself under English protection, and to know what policy England required her to adopt, and the same wish has been repeated to me by various other politicians as the one which generally prevails.

I have ventured upon former occasions, when commenting upon the encroachments of Panslavism, to represent to your Lordship that I saw no better means of arresting that danger than by supporting and strengthening the Hellenic element; and I still venture to think that such a policy would be beneficial to Europe and earn the sympathy and the gratitude of the Hellenic race.

Your Lordship has, however, the means of examining the question from a higher and more general point of view; and whatever may be the decision arrived at by Her Majesty's Government, I feel satisfied that the true interests of Greece and the safety of the King's throne will not be overlooked.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

P.S.—I ought to have included any important Russian victory in Bulgaria amongst the incidents—although it could scarcely be termed an unforeseen incident—which might precipitate an outbreak in the Hellenic provinces of Turkey, and the consequent commencement of hostilities by Greece.

W. S.

No. 324.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 306.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 12, 1877.*

I TOOK an early opportunity after its receipt to read to M. de Giers your Lordship's despatch No. 199 of the 21st ultimo, referring to a phrase in his Excellency's note to me of the 6th May last, in which he apparently gave it to be understood that the suspension of the navigation of the Danube had been ordered

by the Russian Commander-in-chief in the interest of the safety of merchant-vessels.

His Excellency at once admitted the justice of the observation in your Lordship's despatch that the justification for that suspension could only be found in the exigency of military operations, and not from a regard for the safety of neutral vessels.

His Excellency excused the incorrect phrase used in his note by stating that it was an oversight in drawing it up, caused by pressure of business.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 325.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 307.)
St. Petersburgh, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith the inclosed translations from the Russian press by Mr. Michell, giving the opinions of certain leading journals on the probable results of the present war.

The "Financial Review" urges the advantage of a speedy termination to the war in an article of singular moderation.

This view is not shared by the majority of the press, which frankly avows, in contradiction to a recent utterance of the "Nord," that the liberation of the Christians from Turkish rule is not the sole object of Russia's military action, but that her aim is also the free passage of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, the acquisition of the port of Batoum, and the weakening, if not the overthrow, of the Ottoman Empire.

An article in to-day's German "St. Petersburgh Zeitung" is equally unreserved in its condemnation of the idea of a speedy termination to the war, or any attempt on the part of a neutral State to limit the advance of the Russian arms on Constantinople, which capital, it asserts must, temporarily at least, be occupied by Russia, as Paris was by the German forces. It adds that Russia will know how to answer England or any other neutral State who might endeavour to arrest her progress, in the same way as Germany would have answered had an attempt been made to check her advance beyond the Marne or the Loire.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 326.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(Telegraphic.)
Tiflis, June 16, 1877.

RUSSIANS suffered severe losses on or about the 12th near Kars, also near Soukoum Kalé on the 3rd instant. Revolt at Tchlav, 50 miles from Tiflis.

No. 327.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(Telegraphic.)
Tiflis, June 16, 1877.

RUSSIAN authorities refuse to let the sixty-three Turks go viâ Akhalziks and the Potzkov to Batoum. Please communicate this to Constantinople, so that the necessary instructions be issued by the Porte for the reception of those people at some particular outpost; also telegraph to me the name of the place, and I will inform authorities here.

No. 328.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(Telegraphic.)
Scutari, June 16, 1877.

TELEGRAMS in cypher for Her Majesty's Government are again refused here.

Turkish troops before Spuz commenced another advance this morning, and fighting is now going on beyond Elgrad.

No. 329.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 171.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 16, 1877, 9·45 P.M.

I AM informed that Russians have issued Proclamation to Bulgarians calling upon them to rise in arms against Turkey to avenge last year's atrocities.

No. 330.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

(No. 172.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 17, 1877, 6·20 P.M.

I HAVE been informed confidentially that on the recommendation of the Russian Minister at Athens, Greek Government has sent a secret Agent to meet the Emperor of Russia in Roumania.

Sent to Mr. Stuart.

No. 331.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

(No. 173.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 17, 1877, 6·30 P.M.

PORTE has decided upon sending Haidar Bey, formerly Turkish Ambassador at Vienna, in the same capacity to Tehran.

Sent to Mr. Thomson.

No. 332.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

(No. 174.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 17, 1877, 7·30 P.M.

TRANSPORTS, with about 7,000 Egyptian troops furnished by Khedive, have just passed through the Bosphorus on their way to Varna.

No. 333.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

(Telegraphic.)
Vienna, June 17, 1877.

FOLLOWING from Mr. St. John:—

"A telegram from Cettigné announces that 3,000 horses, laden with provisions, have entered Nichsich."

No. 334.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

Scutari, June 17, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

NICHSICH was successfully relieved yesterday.

As the Montenegrins appear to have to give way gradually before the Turks, whose forces are daily increasing and already amount to upwards of 60,000 men, a moment may speedily arrive when the existence of Montenegro may be in the greatest danger.

If Montenegro should apply for intervention of Consuls to obtain suspension of hostilities should I take any action in the matter? Yesterday's fighting at Spuz resulted in a return of the Turks to their original position.

No. 335.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 17, night.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Bucharest, June 17, 1877, 1-50 P.M.

A BRIDGE has been thrown across the Danube at Ibraïla; the Emperor goes there to-morrow. There is every indication that the passage there will be rather in the character of a false attack. There is every chance that the passage will be attempted at a later date at Flamindа, Zimnicea, at a spot half-way between Giurgevo and Oltenitza, as well as at Gura Jalomitza.

No. 336.

Mr. Plunkett to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 105.)

Washington, June 5, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegrams of the 31st ultimo and the 1st instant, and to my telegrams of the 1st and 3rd instant, I have the honour to report that there are still two Russian men-of-war remaining in American waters, viz., the "Kreiser," under repairs at Philadelphia, and the "Japonetz," which, as I am assured by M. Shiskine, is in so dilapidated a condition that Admiral Crown has gone to San Francisco to survey her, and decide whether she is worth repairing.

The arrival of Admiral Crown in the United States was reported by Captain Gore Jones in his despatch of the 23rd of last February, which was inclosed to your Lordship in Sir Edward Thornton's No. 63 of the same month. Since then he has been engaged inspecting the private ship-building yards of the United States, and ascertaining their capabilities. He acts independently of the Russian Legation in Washington, having come out ostensibly as Agent of the Russian Admiralty for the purchase of the stores which might be required during the stay of the Russian fleet in these waters. He has, I believe, purchased large quantities of all kinds of stores, but I cannot learn of his having equipped any vessels of the "Alabama" class, as was reported to Her Majesty's Ambassador in St. Petersburgh.

It is not impossible that he may have come out with some such intention, believing that he would receive the tacit connivance of the United States' Government; but this hope must soon have proved illusory. As far as I am able to judge of the matter, both from conversations with members of the Russian and other Legations, and from the general tone of the press, I am of opinion that the Russians are much disappointed with the treatment they have experienced in this country. They greatly miscalculated the feeling of America towards Great Britain, and have found, instead of a tacit connivance with their wishes, a decidedly-expressed desire that they would relieve the country from the presence of their ships, and the consequent danger of complicated international questions.

It is possible that the two Russian ships still remaining on either side of this continent may be intended to take on board the torpedoes now being made here for the Russian Government, and it is also not improbable that the two store-ships sent from America to meet the squadron at the Azores may afterwards be used as torpedo vessels.

Captain Gore Jones is now in New York obtaining information on these matters, and I shall endeavour to keep your Lordship fully informed of all that he may hear of importance bearing upon the question.

It is now said that the orders of the squadron were, after the rendezvous at Flores in the Azores, to cruize in the neighbourhood of the Straits of Gibraltar, with the view of intercepting the supply ships of the Turkish Government going from this country.

Before concluding this despatch I think it right to mention that the Russian Legation here seems greatly put out at the warm reception given to General Grant in England, and I notice generally, on their part, an inclination always to sneer at and depreciate the good relations at present existing between the two great Anglo-Saxon communities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. W. PLUNKETT.

No. 337.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 53. Political.)

My Lord,

Bosna-Serai, June 6, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a report on the alleged impalement of Rado Buitch at Doberlin on February 1876.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

Inclosure 1 in No. 337.

Report on the alleged Impalement of Rado Buitch at Dobertin, and other imputed Turkish excesses.

ACCORDING to instructions received from Mr. Consul Holmes, I quitted Serajevo on the 19th ultimo, to inquire into the truth of the statement that Rado Buitch had been impaled near Novi in the latter part of February or the beginning of March, 1876, as reported in my despatch to the Earl of Derby of the 17th March of last year.

I proceeded first by way of Banialuka, Gradishka, and the Save, to Agram, and called upon his Excellency General Mollinari, Military Governor of Croatia, to request him to furnish me with any information on the subject which he might have received from officers stationed on the frontier in the neighbourhood of Novi. His Excellency most kindly afforded me every facility to examine all the reports made during the last two years by the military officers on the Croato-Bosnian frontier regarding alleged Turkish outrages, and I obtained copy of a report received from Captain Bellobraidic, of the Archduke Ernst Regiment, who was in command of the detachment stationed in March 1876 at Divusha, immediately opposite the spot where the impalement of Rado Buitch is said to have occurred. I annex copy and translation of this report, in which Captain Bellobraidic positively asserts that he saw a human body stuck on a pole on the Turkish heights opposite Divusha. I next proceeded to Petrinja, the present head-quarters of the Archduke Ernst Regiment, and, in presence of his Colonel and Major, examined Captain Bellobraidic personally, who confirmed his report, and said that the body could be clearly seen with the naked eye, and that he also examined it through a field glass. I asked him what he should calculate to have been the distance from the spot where he stood to the pole on which he saw the body, and he replied that it was probably 2,000 paces as the crow flies.

I then went to Kostainitza, where I questioned Captain Farkas, who in March last year was Subaltern in Captain Bellobraidic's company at Divusha. He stated to me, in the presence of his superior officer, Major Lönhard, that Rado Buitch, who since the outbreak of the insurrection in Bosnia had resided in Divusha, was well known for his continued and audacious raids across the frontier for the purpose of cattle-lifting and other depredations on Turkish property. The Turks had experienced so much injury at his hands, that it was well known they had an especial spite against him, and had vowed that if they once caught him they would have their revenge.

One morning, about the end of February last year, he was informed that the Turks had actually caught Buitch, and had impaled him on the hill-side above the railway station of Doberlin. He repaired to a spot whence he was informed he could see the sad spectacle, and a pole was pointed out to him in the distance, on which there appeared to be something resembling in shape a human body; but he most positively declared that the distance was so great—not less than two or three miles—that it was impossible, even with a field glass, to clearly distinguish what the object on the pole really was. It was asserted, however, and seemed to be generally believed, that it was the body of Rado Buitch. Captain Farkas said that he quitted Divusha on the 14th June following, and that the pole was then still standing, but that there was no longer anything on it.

From Kostainitza I went to Divusha, where I examined several witnesses. The first of these was a Jew inn-keeper, named Löwenstein, to whom I had been particularly recommended as the most likely man in the place to furnish me with an unbiassed account of the matter, being an honest person, and having no especial sympathy either for Christian or Turk. He confirmed Captain Farkas' statement, and also said that the distance was so great that it was quite impossible to distinguish with the naked eye what the object on the pole was, and he himself did not believe it to be a human body. He said I should be able to obtain no reliable testimony at Divusha, as people were either prejudiced in favour of one side or the other, or else they feared to speak out lest they should have later to undergo the annoyance of being called before a tribunal to give evidence. I next repaired to the office of the "Gemeindevorstand," or Mayor, and asked him what information he could give me on the subject. He seemed very loth to say anything, and only stated that the impaled body had been pointed out to him, but that it was too far off to distinguish what it actually was. I then examined in his presence an innkeeper named Talich, who, on the contrary, declared that the atmosphere was very clear that day, and that he could distinctly make out the object on the pole to be a human body without a head. I remarked that in that case the man had not been impaled alive, but he replied that the head had been cut off afterwards. This appears to me absurd, as the perpetrators of such a deed would not have cared to shorten the poor being's sufferings by beheading him immediately afterwards, and once the pole had been planted in the ground they would probably have had no means of climbing up to do so. I finally examined a certain Bosnian refugee named Elia Subanovich, native of the same village (Voditchevo) as Rado Buitch. He stated that the whole matter had been recounted to him by one Djuran Berra, who with Rado Buitch and three others formed the party that was attacked by a band of about sixty mounted Bashi-Bazouks, under the command of a certain Ali Aga Tchaushevich, of Bilaech. One of their number was killed, Rado Buitch was impaled, and the other three escaped. This witness went into the most absurd details, and declared even that he could recognize the linen shirt worn by the impaled man as one he had sold to Rado Buitch. He said the body remained for some weeks on the pole, but finally disappeared, but he did not know whether it had been taken down or fallen away from putrefaction. I cross-examined these last two witnesses with considerable care, and felt convinced that their testimony could not be fully relied on. From the Prefect of Dvor I obtained copy of a deposition regarding this alleged impalement made by the said Elia Subanovich on the 2nd of March, 1876, before the Mayor of Divusha. I annex hereto a translation of this deposition. I much wished to have been able to examine Djurra Berra personally, but no one could give me any information as to what had become of him.

At Novi I also instituted inquiries. I was well aware that, even had Rado Buitch been impaled, no one would acknowledge it, but I was desirous to hear the Turkish version of his death, and notice whether there were any discrepancies in the story as recounted by different persons. They said that information was received one day at Novi that a herd of cattle, and a Mussulman youth, named Hassan Alaghich, who was watching them, had been driven off not far from the town and taken towards the hills by a party of insurgents. A detachment of cavalry, consisting of nine men and a lieutenant, named Ibraïm Aga, and a few of the inhabitants of Novi, instantly started off towards Doberlin, hoping to cut off the insurgents in the Pastirevo Hills, should they attempt to make for the Austrian frontier. In this they were successful; a few shots were exchanged, two of the insurgents were killed, the cattle and the youth Hassan were rescued, and the remaining insurgents fled to the woods. It was already getting dark, and, therefore, it was thought unwise to follow them, especially as the main object of recovering the cattle had been accomplished. The officer, Ibraïm Aga, did not know Rado Buitch by sight, but some of the inhabitants of Novi recognized

him in one of the insurgents who had been shot. This was the account given, with very little variation, by all the Turks, and confirmed by Ibraïm Aga, who by chance was in command of the escort of cavalry which accompanied me to Pridor. The only diversity of opinion seemed to be regarding the number of insurgents, but Ibraïm Aga positively stated that there were nine, of which seven escaped. At Novi I also had the occasion of conversing with M. Sroczynski, correspondent of the "Pester Lloyd" and other papers. He stated that he was in that neighbourhood last year when it was reported that Rado Buitch had been impaled, and that he repaired to the spot himself, and found nothing but a pole with some Indian corn leaves put on it to dry.

Altogether the evidence was very conflicting, but, having carefully weighed all I heard, I must confess that the impression left on me is that Rado Buitch was not impaled. Some of the testimony I received, either from the manner in which it was given, or from the known sympathies of the parties, I regard as worthy of little credit, but I am far from wishing to impugn the evidence of gentlemen like Captains Bellobraidic and Farkas. It will be remarked that Elia Subanovich's statement to me differs materially from the disposition he made in March last year before the Mayor of Divusha, according to which only the dead body of Rado Buitch after it had been beheaded was placed on a stake; whereas he now pretends that the man was impaled alive, but I could obtain no evidence to prove this. I would here remark that even the mode of impalement as formerly practised in these countries did not seem to be understood by people in Austria, and I was frequently asked whether men were impaled vertically or horizontally. Surely, if the impaled body of Buitch had been so clearly visible from Austrian territory, and had remained exposed to view so long, there could have been no question as to its relative position to the stake. Some fifty years ago impalement was not an uncommon punishment in this province, and eye-witnesses of this barbarous practice have explained to me how it was done. A packsaddle was laid on the ground, on which the victim was placed on his stomach, and a long pointed stake was then driven vertically through his body from the lower part upwards by means of a heavy wooden mallet until it protruded somewhere, either through his chest, back, or shoulder, as the case might be. The stake was then raised into a perpendicular position and planted in the ground. In most cases death was immediate, but sometimes the unfortunate sufferer lingered for hours, and even for days, it is said, if no vital organ had been pierced.

The day I was at Divusha the weather was overcast and the atmosphere by no means clear, but I have very good sight, and I should say it was utterly impossible for anyone to distinguish with the naked eye, at such a distance from the spot indicated to me as the site of the impalement, what was really the object on the pole. I fully understand Captain Bellobraidic believing that what he saw was a human body, and doubt not that he was perfectly sincere in his declaration. He was told that it was Rado Buitch, and therefore regarded it with a preconceived notion, and fancied he could distinguish the form of a body, but I know by my own experience how often the eyesight is deceived at much shorter distances than that in question.

As regards the testimony of M. Heinrich Renner, special correspondent of the "Golos," who, in his letter from Belgrade of January 29, published in the "Daily News" of February 6, 1877, states that he was an eye-witness of the impalement at Doberlin, I may remark that the officers of the Archduke Ernst regiment and others did not seem to have a very high opinion of that gentleman, and said that his one aim was to write sensational articles to the papers, without caring to ascertain the truth of what was told him. In his letter above-mentioned he states that "four refugees who lived till then in Croatia returned home. . . . . Three of these poor refugees have been cut to pieces in Novi, and the fourth one, a smith, Rado Buitch by name, has been impaled on the railway station, Doberlin. . . ." But neither Elia Subanovich nor any other witness confirmed this statement as regards the three killed in Novi, and it is evident that M. Renner had not taken the trouble to verify what he wrote.

It is quite possible that the body of Rado Buitch was placed on a stake after death, but even this appears doubtful, and there is absolutely no evidence to show that the man was impaled alive. The testimony of Elia Subanovich, in fact, as given in his original deposition, proves the very reverse, and this witness is not likely to have had any inclination to mitigate the acts of his adversaries the Turks.

During my late journey I also made all possible inquiries to elucidate the question of impalements on the banks of the Save, as reported by the Revs. Canon Liddon and MacColl, but I could obtain no clue to anything of the kind. No one I met had seen

such impalements, and those who had heard of them had only done so through the newspapers, and they were invariably talked of as the impalements reported by Mr. McColl and Miss Irby, they being the sole authorities for their occurrence. Captain Gummer, of the Save steamer, who has been sixteen years on the line, and knows every spot from Semlin to Sissek, who passes his whole time on deck, and could not fail to remark any unusual object, is positive that nothing of the kind has taken place on the banks of the Save. He says he remembers on one occasion some passengers declaring they saw a head stuck on a pole, but on fetching his glass it proved to be only a burnt tree, of which a tuft of leaves had escaped. Among the reports from the officers on the frontier in the chancery of General Mollinari, I could find none regarding impalements except Captain Bellobraidic's concerning the impalement of Rado Buitch. Had such acts been perpetrated along the banks of the Save they could not fail to have come to the knowledge of the frontier officers, who have the strictest orders to report to Agram any Turkish excesses, and to take the depositions of all fugitive Bosnians before they have had time to communicate with and be influenced by the people of Austrian Croatia. M. Alfred Boich also, who was sent last year as Commissioner to Dobretin when the frontier was violated by the Turkish troops, travelled along the whole northern frontier of Bosnia as far as Gradishka, but nowhere heard anything confirmatory of impalements. I believe and trust, therefore, that Canon Liddon and Mr. McColl must have been mistaken in taking the object they saw on a pole to be a human body. The use of high poles on which to put hay, beans, Indian corn leaves, and other agricultural produce to preserve them from wet and from the cattle, is very general throughout this province, and a small portion left upon one of them might very well at a distance bear a resemblance to a human body. These poles may also often be seen near guard-houses, as they serve to keep Indian corn leaves for the mens' beds, or hay, should the "Bulukbashi," or Chief of the station, have a horse, as is frequently the case.

At Priedor I inquired into the alleged murder of the Greek schoolmaster, whose head, it was said, had been carried in triumph on a pole through the town in March, 1876. I spoke with the present schoolmaster, Elia Zelenika, who has been at Priedor since August, 1875. He said he could not in any way account for this false report, as he had never even been molested. His pupils had uninterruptedly attended school since his arrival, and at the present moment he had no less than ninety. The emigration of Christian merchants from Priedor has likewise been much exaggerated, and probably not more than one-fifth of their whole number have quitted their homes.

My late journeys have convinced me that there is no truth in the report that murders and outrages are on the increase in the north of Bosnia. In proof of this assertion I may state that the only outrage reported to General Mollinari by the frontier officers during the last six or seven months, is the affair of Otchievo. There are no doubt isolated cases of murder and violence, of which Turks and Christians are alike in turn the victims and the perpetrators, and only ten days before I passed, a zaptieh who attempted to go alone from Novi to Priedor, was found murdered on the road, his head and one of his hands having been cut off and carried away. I received, however, the same reassuring information on this as on my previous journey, that the troops upon the whole conducted themselves well, and that their presence inspired confidence in the Christian population.

The country which I traversed, from Banialuka to Gradishka, and from Kostainitza to Novi, Priedor, and Banialuka, presented the same scene of desolation as those parts of the Sandjak of Bihach, which I had already visited, houses burnt, crops of last year left to rot on the ground, no fresh cultivation, and the pasturages, luxuriant in their spring growth, but without a single head of cattle left to graze on them. The sites of the peasants' cottages are now scarcely recognizable; when burnt they have but little *débris*, and their insignificant ruins are completely overgrown with grass and weeds.

I cannot refrain from mentioning one pleasing incident in connection with the flight of the Christian peasants from the neighbourhood of Banialuka. On my late journey from that town to Gradishka, in the midst of the general desolation, I was surprised to see in one locality some houses standing and certain fields cultivated. On inquiry, I found they all belonged to a rich Turkish proprietor, named Yusuf Bey Silich. When the insurrection broke out and all the peasants were flying and the Mussulman landowners were seeking refuge in the towns, Yusuf Bey engaged twenty Albanians to guard his country house, and then calling around him his rayahs, he told them that if they wished they were at liberty to fly with the rest and he would not prevent them, but that he intended to defend his property to the last. If, on the contrary, they

would stand by him, he would not desert them, and he trusted that this mutual protection and confidence would bring them all scathless through the difficulty. Yusuf Bey had always been a good and liberal master, and his peasants, without exception, determined to remain faithful to him, and up to the present moment not one, it is said, has either joined the insurgents or fled to Austria. There can hardly be a more striking proof than this of the extent to which the Turkish landowners are responsible for the present insurrection. No doubt there are many other kind and just Beys in the country besides Yusuf Bey, but either want of tact, a lack of courage, or other circumstances have prevented them from acting with the same energy and wisdom.

In conclusion, I would remark that the result of my late journeys has been to make me more disinclined than ever to put faith in the stories of Turkish outrage and violence. Such stories have frequently, it must be acknowledged, a foundation of truth, but there is such an inclination on the one side to pervert and exaggerate, and on the other to extenuate and palliate, that it is almost impossible to ascertain the real facts. I think, however, that my tour in the north will have produced a very salutary effect in the country, as it has shown the Mussulmans that their actions are watched, and that they cannot give vent to their fanaticism with impunity.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

Bosna-Seraï, June 5, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 337.

Deposition made before the Mayor of Divushi, on the 2nd of March, 1876, by Elia Subanovich, regarding the Impalement of Rado Buitch.

(Translation.)

WITH the fugitive Ilia Subanovich, who lives in the village of Oraovitza, under the jurisdiction of this Commune, and lodges with Arsenija Radjenovich. Concerning the question of the death of Rado Buitch, and of the barbarity committed by the Turkish soldiers.

The said (Ilia Subanovich) was interrogated as to what he knew of the death of Rado Buitch, and whether Rado Buitch was impaled, and he was adjured to tell the plain truth, and throw light on the matter.

Djuradj Berra recounted to me (Ilia Subanovich) yesterday, the 1st of March of the current year, that he, together with Rado Buitch and five other companions, passed over into Turkey whence they had been driven by the Turks; they took the direction of the village of Tzerovitza, not far from Novi, with the intention of robbing and carrying off horses and cattle of the Turks. When they came to a Turkish house in the village of Tzerovitza, a Serb, acting as spy, went in haste to Novi, and presenting himself before the Military Commander, exclaimed, "Behold, the insurgents are carrying off the Turkish herds and flocks." Immediately the trumpet was sounded to assemble the troops. More than 200 horsemen having assembled, they went in pursuit of the insurgents from Novi up to the village called Vinara or Gjurichi, whence six insurgents fled out each as he best could in a different direction, but Rado Buitch, who was stout and a well-to-do man not accustomed to running, was so tired that he could scarcely move. Then the Chief of the troops, Alia Tchaushevich, called out, "Oh, Rado Buitch throw down your gun and lower your hands." Confused and completely tired he obeyed; threw his arms on the ground and lowered his hands. The horsemen then fell upon him, and Alia Tchaushevich, drawing his knife, cut off his head. Then some of the military went to the "kotar" (shed or outbuilding) of Vasilio Djurich and brought a stake four yards long and impaled the dead body, and then planted the stake in the ground. The head they took to Novi. Before they cut off his head they plunged a knife three times into his chest, and then withdrawing it wiped the blood off the knife across his lips. Before all this happened Gjuran Berra had concealed himself behind a tree not far off and saw what took place. The Turks did not discover him because they pursued the other insurgents to the Pastirevo forest, where they killed one more whose name I do not know, and they took another alive and conducted him to Novi. The other two fled to the dense forest, where the Turks could not attain them. Nothing else happened at this time.

(Signed) ✠ ELIA SUBANOVICH.
SALOMAN, *Notary.*

In my presence,
(Signed) BUITON, *Mayor.*

Inclosure 3 in No. 337.

Report from Captain Bellobraidic to the General Commander at Agram, regarding the Impalement of Rado Buich.

(Translation.)

ACCORDING to concordant information, last Sunday a Bosniak, lodging in Unchana, named Rado Buich, who has his house opposite Divusha, on Turkish territory, with four other Bosniaks, went over the Unna to visit an acquaintance. By the Turkish railway station, Doberlin, the Turkish troops are said to have fallen upon the said Bosniaks, to have beheaded one, bound two and carried them off to Novi and to have impaled alive the third, the said Rado Buich, on the Turkish heights, situated opposite Divusha.

I actually saw also, on the said height, the disgusting spectacle of a human body impaled on a stake, visible in the far distance.

(Signed) BELLOBRAIDIC, *Captain.*

Divusha, March 2, 1876.

No. 338.

Acting-Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 54. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, June 6, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to Mr. Consul Holmes' despatch, Political, No. 46 of the 16th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the expedition against the insurgents in Grahovo and Tishkovatz has been brought to a close without any result whatever, and the troops have returned to Banialuka and Travnik. The insurgents would nowhere face the troops, and I hear that they are much irritated against their Commander, Despotovich, for not allowing them to do so.

Ismet Pasha states that on two or three occasions he saw small numbers of the insurgents on the hill tops, and a few shots were exchanged at extreme distances, but directly the troops advanced the insurgents disappeared and the former could never come up with them. Ismet Pasha occupied with his forces the heights overlooking Tzerni Potok, which appeared to be abandoned, and his excuse for not advancing further is, that had he then been attacked a violation of the Austrian frontier would have been inevitable, for although he might have restrained his men they could not even have fired on the insurgents without their bullets passing far over the frontier.

The military authorities appear at last to be convinced that expeditions of this kind against the insurgents cannot possibly have any result, but I believe that it is now decided, as I have long recommended, to establish small military posts all over the disturbed districts. This will keep the insurgent bands in check and reassure the peaceably inclined inhabitants, and towards winter, when the insurgents begin to find it difficult to keep the hills, a few flying columns, under energetic officers, would probably succeed in clearing the country.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 339.

Acting Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 55. Political.)

Bosna-Serai, June 7, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that information has been received from the Mushir, Suleiman Pasha, that on the 3rd instant he started from Aftovtza, near Gnizo, *en route* for Nichsich, with twenty-six battalions, numbering about 15,000 men. From Orlina to Kristach the Montenegrins had occupied all the heights; but, after five hours' hard fighting, they were driven from their positions, and the Turkish troops succeeded in reaching the latter place. Suleiman Pasha estimated the Montenegrin force at not less than 6,000 men, and he describes this encounter as one of the severest that has occurred during the present war. The Montenegrins resisted with great bravery, and were only repulsed after a sharp hand-to-hand struggle. He said

their losses were very great, and those of his troops comparatively small. The following day he hoped to reach Zlastop.

Also, on the 3rd instant, Mehmet Ali Pasha attacked the Montenegrins from the side of Berané, and advanced his positions a distance of eight or nine miles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWD. B. FREEMAN.

No. 340.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 72. Political.)

Belgrade, June 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that M. Ristitch, the Foreign Minister, called upon me, and also upon my colleagues yesterday, for the purpose of acquainting every one of us with the intended departure of the Prince of Servia for Bucharest.

The Minister told me that he had instructed M. Cristitch, the Servian Agent at Constantinople, to explain that as nothing hostile to the Porte was intended by this visit, it was hoped that no false interpretation would be put upon the motives which had induced Prince Milan to take advantage of this opportunity to pay his respects to the Czar.

These motives, according to the language of M. Ristitch, are the obligations of courtesy which the Prince entertains towards His Majesty, as one of the Sovereigns who has guaranteed this Principality.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. A. WHITE.

No. 341.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 499.)

Vienna, June 9, 1877.

My Lord,

I WAS informed at the Foreign Office to-day that a report had been received there to the effect that the Turks had carried a position at the entrance of the Duga Pass, but that more fighting is expected, as the Pass is still occupied by the Montenegrin troops.

From what I could gather of the expeditions from Scutari and to Goransko, neither of them appear to have been attended with success.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 342.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 502.)

Vienna, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that a telegram has been received here to-day from the Governor of Dalmatia, in which the Turks are reported to have succeeded in provisioning Goransko, and to be now concentrated at Krstaes, from whence they intend to force their way to Nichsich.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ANDREW BUCHANAN.

No. 343.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 249.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 215 of the 10th instant, M. de Bülow informs me that reassuring reports have been received by the German Government from the Syrian coast; that 500 men of Turkish regular troops had been retained there for the preservation of order, and that he thought no alarm need at present be felt of any disturbances in that quarter.

His Excellency expressed great satisfaction at the order given by Her Majesty's Government that a man-of-war be sent to that coast.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 344.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 250.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 214 of the 10th instant, relative to the stoppage by the Porte of telegraphic communication with Odessa, M. de Bülow has requested me to state to your Lordship that he entirely agreed with the view taken by Her Majesty's Government in that matter, and that he thought it would be inexpedient to raise the question at Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 345.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 251.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

IN accordance with your Lordship's instructions, I have communicated to M. de Bülow the substance of the correspondence inclosed in your Lordship's No. 211 of the 8th instant relative to the proclamation of the state of siege in Constantinople.

His Excellency said that Prince Reuss had been instructed to represent to the Porte that German subjects, and those of Russia under German protection, should be exempted from the application of that measure, but that the German Ambassador had only obtained the promise that, in the event of an infringement of that law, the case should, before being disposed of by the Turkish authorities, be at once brought to the knowledge of the German Ambassador.

The German Government had, therefore, not deemed it necessary to press the matter further, and would certainly not do so after the additional assurances given to Mr. Layard by the Grand Vizier that foreigners shall be in no way molested.

M. de Bülow requested me to convey to your Lordship the thanks of the German Government for the above communication.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 346.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 253.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Russian Government appears to have arranged with the firm of Messrs. Mendelsohn, of Berlin, for the issue of a loan of 107,000,000 marks, the subscriptions to be opened in Berlin, Amsterdam, and Paris.

The most remarkable feature of this transaction is that the stock will probably be offered at 74 in German currency.

This loan, however, it is said, is only to be brought out after the subscription for the Internal Loan has been closed in Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 347.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 254.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

IF I am correctly informed no official proclamation of neutrality will be issued by the German Government. Their action will be simply limited to warning captains of German merchant-vessels of the risk they run by any disregard of the laws of neutrality.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 348.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 255. Confidential.)
Berlin, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

HAVING been informed on good authority that the Russian Ambassador had, in notifying the contents of Prince Gortchakow's reply to your Lordship's note to Count Schouvaloff, accompanied it by an important verbal communication, I endeavoured to ascertain its nature, and if it had any reference to the terms of peace between Russia and Turkey to which your Lordship refers, in your despatch No. 225, Confidential, to Lord A. Loftus, of the 11th June, as having already been notified in strict confidence to Prince Bismarck.

M. de Bülow stated that beyond the confidential notification of the Russian reply the German Government had received no confidential communication whatever, verbal or otherwise, from the Russian Government or its Ambassador in Berlin as to the eventual action of Russia towards Turkey; that Russia and England having the main interests in the arrangement that would have to be made with regard to Turkey the German Government was not at present prepared to entertain or offer an opinion on the subject.

Although M. de Bülow's reply tallies with the assurances given to me by the Russian Ambassador, that no communication has been made to the German Government with regard to the Russian proposals, it is not only generally accepted, but affirmed, as I have already stated to your Lordship, that the course followed by the Russian Government in the present emergency meets with the entire approval and concurrence of the Emperor of Germany and his Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 349.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 18.)

(Télégraphique.)
Constantinople, le 17 Juin, 1877.

VOTRE Excellence a sans doute appris que le Prince Milan, accompagné de M. Ristich, s'est rendu dans les Principautés Unies pour visiter l'Empereur de Russie. M. Murien, donnant cette nouvelle à son Agent ici, avait ajouté que la visite du Prince n'avait pour but que de présenter ses hommages à un Souverain signataire du Traité de Paris.

Après les bienfaits dont elle a comblé la Servie, après surtout la modération et la bienveillance dont elle a fait preuve à son égard tout récemment encore, la Sublime Porte ne peut que voir avec une grande surprise cette attitude du Prince Milan. En

effet; la raison alléguée par M. Ristich pour justifier l'absence du Prince dans un moment si critique aurait pu être admise, s'il se fût souvenu de se rendre auprès de la Cour Suzeraine. Mais cette raison devient incompréhensible, lorsque le Prince Milan entreprend un voyage auprès d'un Souverain dont tous les efforts sont dirigés ouvertement contre le Traité de Paris et contre la Cour Suzeraine.

Dans cette situation, nous ne pouvons qu'attribuer à une arrière pensée la visite faite par le Prince Milan à l'Empereur Alexandre. Le Gouvernement Servien a toujours été prodigue en assurances amicales envers nous; et celles qu'il nous renouvelle aujourd'hui sont loin de se concilier avec ses actes et ses agissements.

Je vous prie d'exprimer à M. le Ministre des Affaires Etrangères la pénible impression que la Sublime Porte en ressent, et de ne pas lui cacher les légitimes préoccupations que cet état de choses nous cause. Vous voudrez bien, en même temps, nous faire connaître la manière dont son Excellence envisage la conduite du Prince de Servie.

No. 350.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(Telegraphic.) (Confidential.) *Bucharest, June* 18, 1877, 11·30 A.M.

THIRTEENTH Army Corps is moving down towards the Danube. The 4th, which completes the active army of ten corps, is coming up rapidly by rail through Moldavia.

No. 351.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

(No. 175.) (Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 18, 1877, 11 A.M.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that the Porte intends to take no notice of Prince Milan's visit to the Emperor of Russia in Roumania.

No. 352.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

Vienna, June 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to my despatch No. 511, Confidential, I learn from Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the Porte included coals for Roumania in contraband trade of war on agreeing to permit navigation of the Danube as far as Tinok, and that the Austrian Government have accepted the arrangement.

No. 353.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 18.)

Galatz, June 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

PREPARATIONS for a bridge have been begun on both sides of the Danube at Ibraila.

No. 354.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Kirby Green.[a]

Foreign Office, June 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, Her Majesty's Government are not in a position to authorize any intervention for suspension of hostilities under present circumstances.

If any application is made to you by the Prince, it will be duly considered.

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[a] Repeated to Constantinople.

No. 355.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 18, 1877, 1·20 P.M.

HAVING regard to peculiar necessities of Suez Canal, will Russian Government agree that coal shall not be deemed contraband of war by reason only of its being shipped to an Egyptian port, and instruct their Consular Officers in England to grant certificates of protection against seizure to coal ships on production of shipping documents or other evidence showing that the coal is intended for delivery in Egypt at a neutral depôt, or to neutral firms, individuals, or vessels?

No. 356.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Siborne.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June* 18, 1877.

MR. LAYARD reports that Porte will not give formal consent respecting flag, but no notice will be taken if Commission flag is flown without Turkish flag when there is no Turkish authority near authorized to interfere.

No. 357.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(No. 250. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *Foreign Office, June* 18, 1877.

IN a confidential conversation which I held this day with the Russian Ambassador, his Excellency reverted to the subject of the terms of peace put forward by his Government as being those which they intended to propose in the event of the war ending without the Russian armies having crossed the Balkans. He asked me whether I was prepared or whether I wished to express any opinion in regard to them on behalf of Her Majesty's Government.

I said that I did not understand them to have been put before us with a view to any present expression of opinion, and before I could give one, it would be necessary that I should consult my colleagues, which I was ready to do if he thought it desirable. I added, however, that in my personal judgment it seemed impossible to expect that the Porte should consent to these proposals until reduced to the last extremity. The difficulty, as it seemed to me, did not lie so much in the proposed cession of Batoum, or of a portion of Roumania, as in the erection of Bulgaria into an autonomous State, which would practically become a dependency of Russia, and which it was now proposed to carry far to the south of the Balkans.

Count Schouvaloff, speaking also in a purely personal and confidential manner, said that he was not surprised at the reply I had given, adding that he had frequently warned his Government that England would never accept the extension, which he had lately communicated to me, of the original proposal as regards Bulgaria.

I thereupon observed that it would be better under the circumstances mentioned that he should not, unless expressly instructed to do so, ask for an official reply to his communication.

To this his Excellency agreed.

In the course of this same conversation, Count Schouvaloff dwelt at some length and with much earnestness on the impossibility of the Austrian Government placing itself in opposition to that of Russia. It appeared to me that he was more anxious to impress this opinion on Her Majesty's Government than personally convinced of its accuracy.

I remarked on the strong objection which Count Andrassy had always shown to the idea of Bulgarian autonomy, and observed that the last development of that idea was not of a nature to conciliate Austrian sympathy.

Count Schouvaloff replied that if Bosnia instead of Bulgaria had been in question, he should have agreed with me. He did not deny that Austria would regard with extreme aversion the idea of a semi-independent Bulgaria, but he said that Count Andrassy well understood that opposition to the Russian plans would be fruitless, and

would, therefore, accept the compensation which it had been arranged that Austria should receive.

It was understood on both sides that this conversation was of a purely personal and unofficial character.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 358.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 19.)

(No. 130. Political.)

Bucharest, June 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of note, with inclosure, which I have received from the Moldo-Wallachian Minister of Foreign Affairs, respecting various incursions, on the part of Turkish soldiers and brigands, along the line of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 358.

M. Cogalniceano to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

Bucarest, le $\frac{26 \text{ Mai}}{11 \text{ Juin}}$, 1877.

M. l'Agent,

PRESQUE chaque jour les autorités administratives et militaires des districts que borde le Danube portent à la connaissance du Gouvernement Princier des actes de déprédation et de cruauté commis par des bandes, plus ou moins nombreuses, de Bachi-Bouzouks et de Tcherkesses qui, de nuit surtout, traversent le Danube, en évitant soigneusement les localités gardées par les postes Roumains, et viennent exercer des brigandages et des massacres parmi les habitants inoffensifs des villages et des hameaux de notre rivage ou parmi les commerçants de nos petits ports.

Quelquefois même, ils franchissent violemment la ligne des piquets militaires, en égorgant les sentinelles isolées, et s'esquivent aussitôt que leurs méfaits ont attiré l'attention sur eux.

Le "Moniteur Officiel" et les journaux du pays ont journellement signalé des faits de ce genre, qu'il me répugne d'énumerer ici; mais comme, en vue des indemnités que nous aurons un jour à réclamer de la Porte, je les fais soigneusement inscrire dans les registres de mon Département, j'en ai consigné quelques uns dans une liste ci-annexée, afin de les remettre en votre mémoire.

Vous connaissez, M. l'Agent, la nature de notre frontière du côté de la Turquie, et l'impossibilité d'établir tout le long de ces quelques 200 kilomètres de limite fluviale, des postes assez fréquents et assez fortement occupés pour surveiller et prévenir les plus secrètes équipées des pillards.

L'armée Roumaine est mise aujourd'hui sur le pied de guerre. En s'abstenant de prendre une position agressive, elle est néanmoins prête à défendre le pays contre les attaques de l'armée Turque. Au canon des forteresses de la rive droite, nos batteries ont su répondre. Là où il y a fait de guerre, nous nous trouvons à même de répondre par la guerre.

Mais nous sommes d'autant plus impuissants à réprimer les actes de brigandage et de barbarie des bandes indisciplinaires de la rive droite, que les usages doux et policés du peuple Roumain, que nos sentiments d'humanité et notre propre dignité ne nous permettent pas d'opposer à ces actes iniques et hors toute loi, le droit de représailles.

Ne voulant pas et ne daignant pas exercer sur la côte Turque des attaques clandestines, qui d'ailleurs n'auraient pour victimes que d'innocentes populations Bulgares et Roumaines, déjà trop éprouvées par la tyrannie arbitraire de l'armée Ottomane, nous nous verrons probablement obligés, si cet état de choses continue, de quitter la réserve que nous nous sommes imposée, et de tenter par nos armes une répression systématique au-delà du Danube.

Toutefois, animés comme nous le sommes, du désir de réduire à ses moindres

rigueurs, le conflit qui existe entre nous et la Porte, nous nous faisons un devoir d'en appeler d'abord aux Puissances Européennes, pour qu'elles veuillent bien intervenir auprès du Gouvernement Turc, afin de ramener la guerre sur le Danube, dans les limites d'un combat légal d'armée à armée, selon le principe généralement admis parmi les peuples civilisés de l'Europe.

C'est pour vous prier, M. l'Agent, de vouloir bien transmettre au Gouvernement Anglais cette réclamation, dont vous apprécierez sans doute la justesse, que j'ai l'honneur de vous adresser la présente note.

Il nous importe beaucoup qu'en toute circonstance, les Puissances Européennes soient assez exactement renseignées pour qu'elles puissent mettre en comparaison, et qu'elles apprécient à leur juste valeur la conduite de la nation Roumaine et celle des autorités qui exercent aujourd'hui leur pouvoir au-delà du Danube, avec un relâchement tout à fait inexcusable.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) COGALNICEANO.

Inclosure 2 in No. 358.

Extrait des Dossiers du Ministère des Affaires Etrangères relatifs aux Déprédations, Massacres, et Enlèvements commis par les Turcs sur la rive Roumaine en 1877.

Le $\frac{25 \text{ Avril}}{7 \text{ Mai}}$.—LE navire du Sieur N. T. Popp, en valeur de 50,000 fr., a été capturé par les Turcs dans les eaux du Jice.

N.B. C'est l'unique fait de ce genre qui sera noté dans cette liste, quoique les cas analogues, constatés par les autorités locales, soient déjà au nombre de dix-huit.

Le $\frac{2 \text{ Mai}}{14 \text{ Mai}}$.—Une bande de Turcs s'empare d'un troupeau de béliers appartenant au Sieur Stan Craici, dans une île non loin de Giurgevo.

Le $\frac{26 \text{ Avril}}{8 \text{ Mai}}$.—Les moulins flottants du Sieur Ch. Staïco, situés à Kisselelz (District d'Ilfove), sont démarrés et emportés par les Bachi-Bouzouks.

Le $\frac{3}{15}$ *Mai*.—Une bande de 150 Turcs met le feu aux embarcations chargées et vides qui se trouvaient à l'embouchure de la rivière du Jice.

Le $\frac{27 \text{ Avril}}{9 \text{ Mai}}$.—Des Turcs venus de Rahova pillent des magasins de blé, situés près de Beket; ils forcent la station d'été du Bureau des Douanes et emportent tout ce qu'ils y trouvent.

Le $\frac{29 \text{ Avril}}{11 \text{ Mai}}$.—Dix habitants (hommes, femmes, et enfants) de la Commune de Kiseani (District de Braïla) sont emmenés en captivité par les Bachi-Bouzouks.

Le $\frac{29 \text{ Avril}}{11 \text{ Mai}}$.— Une embarcation chargée de 600 kilog. de blé est capturé par les Turcs de Silistrie en vue de Calarache.

Le $\frac{4}{16}$ *Mai*.—Les troupeaux du Sieur Raducano Popesco de Braïla, en valeur de 11,155 fr., sont enlevés par les Turcs sur le rivage Roumain.

Le $\frac{5}{17}$ *Mai*.—Le même jour 340 porcs, appartenant au Sieur Dobre Baboy de Pocoviei (District de Jalomitza), deviennent la proie des pillards.

Le $\frac{5}{17}$ *Mai*.—Un homme et deux enfants de la Commune de Tikilesti (District de Braïla) sont emmenés en Turquie par une bande de brigands Turcs.

Le $\frac{6}{18}$ *Mai*.—Deux habitants de Facaïeni (District de Jalomitza) ont le même sort.

Le $\frac{6}{18}$ *Mai*.—Une bande de Turcs pille la maison du fermier de Vladeni (District de Jalomitza), et enlève 95 têtes de gros bétail appartenant aux habitants de Facaïeni et du Borduchani.

Le $\frac{8}{20}$ *Mai*.—Un troupeau de 50 bœufs, appartenant aux habitants de Bertesti et de Borduchani, est massacré et enlevé par ces mêmes pillards. Trois cadavres horriblement mutilés et méconnaissables ont été retrouvés sur le passage de cette bande.

Le $\frac{14}{26}$ *Mai*.—Trent-huit chevaux sont enlevés par les Turcs à Grojdibod, village du District de Romanatzi.

Le $\frac{15}{27}$ *Mai*.—Les troupeaux du village de Janca (District de Romanatzi) sont enlevés de leurs près par les Turcs.

Le $\frac{13 \text{ et } 15}{25 \text{ et } 27}$ *Mai*.—Une bande de Bachi-Bouzouks incendie le village de Flamanda (District de Vlachka).

Le $\frac{18}{30}$ *Mai*.—Le berger Théodore Ungureano de Phidici (District de Dolj) est pillé et massacré par les Turcs.

Le $\frac{27 \text{ Mai}}{8 \text{ Juin}}$.—Une bande de Turcs passe dans une île Roumaine en face de Beket,

pour y voler des bestiaux, qui étaient au pâturage. Voyant arriver contre eux des troupes Roumaines, les pillards prennent la fuite; mais à leur arrivée dans l'île, les soldats Roumains trouvent le cadavre du berger, qui, après avoir été écorché vif par les Turcs, a été horriblement mutilé.

No. 359.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 131. Political.)

Bucharest, June 13, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship a copy of a note which I have received from the Moldo-Wallachian Minister of Foreign Affairs respecting the application of martial law in these Principalities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

Inclosure in No. 359.

M. Cogalniceano to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

Bucarest, le $\frac{30 \text{ Mai}}{11 \text{ Juin}}$ 1877.

M. l'Agent,

L'ÉTAT de guerre dans lequel se trouve le pays autorise le Gouvernement Roumain à mettre en application les dispositions généralement admises qui sont prévues dans les codes militaires au sujet des crimes et délits commis contre la sécurité des armées et leurs opérations militaires.

Le "Moniteur Officiel" du [illegible] courant contient le Décret relatif à ces dispositions. La mesure que le Gouvernement Princier vient de prendre est d'autant plus justifiée que le nombre d'espions, dont la plupart appartiennent à des nationalités étrangères, augmente de jour en jour.

Aussi, j'ai l'honneur de vous prier, M. l'Agent, de vouloir bien inviter les sujets Anglais, domiciliés ou de passage en Roumanie, à ne pas fréquenter les endroits où se trouvent cantonnées les armées en campagne, en les informant en même temps que les conseils de guerre sont autorisés, à partir du 25 Mai courant, de poursuivre tous les individus prévenus de faits attentatoires à la sécurité des armées Russe ou Roumaine.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) COGALNICEANO.

No. 360.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 132. Political.)

Bucharest, June 13, 1877.

My Lord,

HAVING occasion to see M. Bratiano two days since on some business, I took the opportunity of asking the Minister what would be the part played by the Roumanian army in the coming campaign, to which M. Bratiano replied that the Government of Prince Charles had not yet come to any decision.

I remarked that it appeared to me that the Roumanian army had done quite sufficient to vindicate their military honour; that the alacrity with which the territorial army and militia had responded to the call was highly creditable, whilst the conduct of the troops under fire at the works at Kalafat was described to me by Colonel Gaillard, the French Military Attaché with the Russian head-quarters, to be remarkably steady, and quite up to the standard of armies which have a long military tradition.

M. Bratiano answered that the circumstance that such a small per-centage of the Turkish shells exploded detracts a great deal from the merits of the Roumanian soldiery in maintaining a bold face under fire, and proceeded to talk in an extravagant strain respecting what public opinion expects, and of the necessity of the military credit of this country being maintained, even at the expense of some sacrifices, &c.

Later in the day M. Mitilenu, the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, spoke to me of the ardour of the army, and indeed, of the whole male population of the Principalities, to be led against the Turks, a state of feeling which I believe to be much exaggerated, if not absolutely imaginary; but, when coupled with M. Bratiano's language, the above induces me to believe that an adventurous policy will be pursued.

It is now surmised that, when the Russian armies are fairly started in Bulgaria, the Roumanian army may cross the Danube and act independently; for, I believe I am correct in saying that, up to this date, the Emperor Alexander has entered into no alliance or engagement of any sort with the Government of Prince Charles.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. E. MANSFIELD.

No. 361.

Mr. Wood to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 24.)

Tunis, June 12, 1877.

My Lord,

IN connection with my despatch No. 22 of the 5th of June, relative to the advice which some of the foreign Representatives have given to the Bey, to refuse a compliance with the demand of the Porte to assist the Turkish armies, I have the honour to state that it has come to my knowledge from an authentic source that the Duc Decazes has asked the Russian Ambassador at Paris whether it was the intention of Russia to bombard the capital of Tunis; and that Prince Orloff replied that he did not think there was any idea of molesting Tunis unless the Bey gave cause for it.

I can only infer the nature of the instructions which the Duc Decazes must have transmitted to my French colleague from the pressure he employed in his recent interview with the Bey. He requested His Highness to give him a categorical answer or assurance that he would maintain the strictest neutrality in the war between the Sultan and Russia.

On the plea, however, that he could not foresee future events and the combinations to which they may give rise, the Bey declined to bind himself to any line of conduct, but stated that he would act with the prudence required by his position, at the same time that he would reserve the freedom of his action.

The threat of a bombardment has been so often put forward by my colleagues as a means of deterring His Highness from complying with the requisitions of his suzerain—some from real apprehension, others with a view to destroy the obligations imposed upon His Highness by the Sultan's Firman of 1871—that it has finally found its way in the public press, and the attention of Russia has been thus unwarily drawn to Tunis.

Among other remonstrances the French Chargé d'Affaires strongly opposed the wish of General Hussein to proceed to Constantinople on leave of absence, in his private capacity, on the ground that although he is a Circassian by birth, yet as a Tunisian Minister he cannot divest himself of his official character, and Russia might feel disposed to look upon him as the Representative of Tunis, should he co-operate in the war. In order to overcome this difficulty General Hussein has given his resignation, which His Highness has not yet accepted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) RICHARD WOOD.

No. 362.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office June 19.)

(No. 55.)

Buda-Pest, June 14, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 50, I have the honour to state that when to-day I had an interview with M. Tisza I asked his Excellency what had happened with regard to the navigation of the Danube at Orsova, and that he replied that, when the Commander at Adakaleh stopped the navigation a representation was made at Constantinople, in consequence of which the Turkish authorities now only exercise the right of search to stop contraband of war.

When I mentioned that Messrs. Lyall and Co. had complained of the stoppage of

their coal at Adakaleh, he said that he had not heard of any complaints from Hungarians interested in the coal traffic.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 363.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office June 19.)

(No. 56. Confidential.) *Buda-Pest, June 15, 1877.*

Sir,

IN my conversation yesterday with M. Tisza, when allusion was made to Roumania and the rumoured project of uniting Bulgaria with it, his Excellency remarked that, if Roumania were to be independent, it must remain Wallach, and not be allowed to rule over Slavs.

I learn from other quarters that this is considered to be an essential point should the independence of Roumania be eventually acknowledged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 364.

The Secretary to the Admiralty to Lord Tenterden.—(Received June 19.)

Admiralty, June 18, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to previous correspondence, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, for the information of the Earl of Derby, that Captain the Hon. A. C. Hobart has been this day removed from the list of the Royal Navy, he not having intimated to their Lordships his retirement from the Turkish service.

I am, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT HALL.

No. 365.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

Scutari, June 18, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

HEAVY fighting has been going on all day, as the Turks from Nichsich and those from Spuz are endeavouring to form a junction.

No. 366.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 176.) *Therapia, June 18, 1877.*
(Telegraphic.)

NICHSICH has been successfully revictualled by Suleiman Pasha, who is now penetrating into Montenegro.

No. 367.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 177.) *Therapia, June 18, 1877, 11·30 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.)

AUSTRIAN Ambassador presented some days ago a very long note to the Porte, of which the following is the substance:—

Guarantees already given by the Porte's last note are considered incomplete, the reservation made by the Porte in case of need to take measures for defence of national territory inspires Austria with no confidence.

Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs declares that in the event of any infringement of the established principles of the free navigation of the Danube, Austria is resolved to undertake frankly their defence.

Austria does not consider the Danube as a line of defence for the Ottoman Empire. Austrian merchandize in merchant vessels left in ports of the Danube before the declaration of war should be respected.

Austria does not accept the instructions which leave to the Commander-in-chief the right of stopping at pleasure the navigation of the Danube.

Austria takes her stand on the Treaties and the public Acts relating to the navigation of the Danube, and declares herself ready to support her demands energetically. The whole tone of the note is peremptory.

Austrian Ambassador has not mentioned this note, which appears to have been kept secret, to me. I am promised copy of it.

No. 368.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 178. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 19, 1877, 12·30 P.M.*

I HAVE sent the following to the Viceroy of India:—

"Sultan has named the Kasiasker Ahmet Khoulassi Effendi, brother of the late Grand Vizier Shirvanizadeh Mehmet Rushti Pasha, his Envoy to the Ameer of Afghanistan. He is well spoken of. He will leave for Bombay next week. I have had conversation about his Mission with Sheikh-ul-Islam, who is a very intelligent man, and professes himself very favourable to our interests and policy. He assures me that he will give very stringent instructions to the Envoy to threaten the Ameer and such of his Chiefs as are inclined to favour Russia with excommunication if they give us trouble. I have given the Grand Vizier some hints as to the present state of affairs in Afghanistan, and as to the instructions to be furnished to the Envoy. Let me know if you have anything to suggest. The Sultan takes very great interest in this mission, and it would be advisable to show any attention compatible with our neutrality to his Envoy on his arrival at Bombay. He will, I am told, be accompanied by the Turkish Consul at Bombay as far as the Afghan frontier. I have advised that he should take steps to make the object of his Mission known to the Chiefs and others in Afghanistan before entering the country. He will have letters to the Akhon of Swat, and presents to him and the Ameer. Have you a trustworthy person who could accompany him as interpreter without causing suspicion?"

No. 369.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 19.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June 19, 1877.*

TURKS assert that Suleiman Pasha has reached Gradac, three hours from Spuz.

No. 370.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 19, 1877, 5·30 P.M.*

IS the note referred to in your telegram No. 177 the note from Count Andrassy to Count Zichy of May 22, of which a copy was sent to you in my despatch No. 177 of June 7?

No. 371.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 19, 6 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June* 19, 1877, *noon.*

A RECONNAISSANCE in force, under General Skobeleff the younger, will probably take place across the Danube in the course of the next thirty-six hours, somewhere near Oltenitza.

The force will cross in boats, and will consist of Cossacks, Light Infantry, and perhaps a troop of Horse Artillery.

The object appears to be to cut the Varna-Rustchuk Railway.

No. 372.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 209.) *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1877.

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 573 of the 4th instant, reporting the steps which you had taken to induce Prince Abbas Mirza to quit Bagdad, has been received, and I have to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 373.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 20.)

Bucharest, June 12, 1877.

My Lord,

COLONEL MANSFIELD has to-day reported to your Lordship by telegraph the gist of a conversation I had this afternoon with His Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicholas at the head-quarters of the Russian army at Ploeshti.

I have now the honour to submit a more detailed account of what occurred.

On arrival at Ploeshti I called on Count Adlerberg, who received me most courteously, and said that the Emperor desired that I should be attached to the head-quarters of the Grand Duke Nicholas. He advised me, therefore, to present myself without delay to His Imperial Highness.

On arrival at the Grand Duke's quarters, I was received immediately by His Imperial Highness, who at once addressed me in the following manner in the presence of one of his Aides-de-camp:—

"You remember," said the Grand Duke, "how well I received you when you came to our camp near St. Petersburgh on your first appointment as Military Attaché, and you have doubtless not forgotten the kindness you at that time received at the hands of the Emperor."

To this remark I replied in the affirmative.

"Now," continued the Grand Duke, "it appears that you have reported in a sense hostile to our army, and you are aware of what is said and thought about you in Russia on this account."

I replied that I knew that many reports had been spread about concerning me, adding that they were but reports, and that nothing could be brought forward against me.

Here His Imperial Highness interrupted me, saying that there was never smoke without fire, and that my conscience would be my judge.

"Under these circumstances," continued the Grand Duke, "I wish to tell you plainly the conditions on which you will be attached to my head-quarters. You will be most strictly watched ('surveillé'), and if your conduct is not such as it ought to be, or if you write or say the very least thing which I do not approve, I shall send you away immediately ('je vous renverrai à l'instant même').

"You must, therefore, change your opinions, and look upon us in the same light as you did when you first came out to Russia."

Then turning round to the Aide-de-camp (His Imperial Highness evidently thought there were several in the room) the Grand Duke said:—

"I speak to you in the presence of all these gentlemen advisedly, as they know the circumstances, and I wish them to be aware of the conditions on which you will be received amongst us as you formerly were.

"You will consider me as the Emperor, whom I represent as long as I command this army, and try to show yourself worthy of the honour of being permitted to accompany the troops.

"You are the only English officer in an official position attached to the active army; on you, therefore, devolves the responsibility of reporting honestly and correctly all you see. Mind that you fulfil this duty as a man of honour."

With the exception of the remark that my conscience was perfectly clear with regard to what I had reported to my Government on the condition of the Russian army, I thought it prudent, seeing the excited state of the Grand Duke, to refrain from entering into any discussion on the subject.

My first intention was to wait until his Imperial Highness had ceased speaking, and then to inform him that under the circumstances, I considered it my duty to report to Her Majesty's Government by telegraph the conditions under which it was proposed that I should accompany the Russian troops, but the Grand Duke was so much carried away by his feelings that I feared he might make use of expressions which would lead to more serious consequences.

Having repeated to me the pith of the above remarks, his Imperial Highness asked me if I perfectly understood all he had said, and on my replying in the affirmative, shook hands with me and bid me good-bye.

The tone of the Grand Duke was throughout most arrogant and overbearing.

On my return here I reported the circumstance to Colonel Mansfield and begged him to telegraph to your Lordship for further instructions, and I also addressed a letter to the head of the Grand Duke's household, of which the inclosed is a copy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRED. WELLESLEY, *Military Attaché.*

Inclosure in No. 373.

Lieutenant-Colonel Wellesley to General Hall.

Excellence, *Bucarest, le* $\frac{1}{13}$ *Juin*, 1877.

PENDANT l'entrevue que j'ai eu l'honneur d'avoir ce matin avec son Altesse Impériale le Grand-Duc Nicolas à Ploeshti, son Altesse a daigné m'expliquer, en présence d'un de ses aides-de-camp, les conditions auxquelles je serais permis d'accompagner l'armée du Danube.

Ayant cru de mon devoir de faire savoir à mon Gouvernement les conditions ainsi imposées par son Altesse Impériale, je viens vous prier, Excellence, de vouloir bien informer le Grand-Duc combien je regrette ne pas pouvoir me présenter au quartier-général de son Altesse avant de recevoir des ordres ultérieurs de la part du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) Lieutenant-Colonel WELLESLEY.

No. 374.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 20.)

(No. 507.) *Paris, June* 18, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 489 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a note which has been addressed to me in answer to my inquiry respecting the instructions given to the French Chargé d'Affaires at Constantinople with regard to the state of siege in that capital.

The note states that in acting upon the instructions which have been given to him, the views and the language of the Chargé d'Affaires will be in complete accordance with those of Her Majesty's Ambassador.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

Inclosure in No. 374.

The Duc Decazes to Lord Lyons.

Paris, le 15 Juin, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

DANS une note que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de me remettre sous la date du 12 de ce mois, vous vouliez bien me faire savoir qu'à la suite de la proclamation de l'état de siége à Constantinople, l'Ambassadeur de la Reine ayant signalé en termes pressants à la Porte Ottomane l'importance d'éviter que cette mesure ne fût appliquée aux résidents étrangers, le Grand Vézir avait promis qu'ils ne seraient en aucune façon molestés.

Vous ajoutiez que depuis cette assurance, le Gouvernement de la Reine n'avait pas jugé nécessaire d'adresser à l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté des instructions spéciales concernant l'état de siége, mais l'avait invité seulement à déclarer à la Porte qu'il comptait que la promesse faite par le Grand Vézir serait strictement observée et qu'en cas d'infraction, il se réservait d'exiger le maintion des priviléges garantis aux sujets Britanniques par les Capitulations. Vous me demandiez enfin si des instructions avaient été envoyées au Représentant de la France auprès de la Porte Ottomane en vue de protéger les sujets Français contre l'application de l'état de siége.

Le Chargé d'Affaires de France à Constantinople s'est naturellement préoccupé, comme les Représentants des autres pays, des difficultés auxquelles pouvait donner lieu, en présence du régime militaire établi par l'autorité Turque, le maintien des immunités traditionnellement acquis aux résidents étrangers. Lorsqu'il a abordé cette question avec la Porte, il s'est placé sur le même terrain que Mr. Layard et il a reçu des assurances semblables. Il a d'ailleurs pour instruction de ne pas permettre qu'il soit porté atteinte aux droits que les Capitulations garantissent à ses nationaux, et je suis heureux de penser qu'en se conformant aux directions que je lui ai tracées à cet effet, il se trouvera en complet accord de vues et de langage avec l'Ambassadeur de la Reine.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) DECAZES.

No. 375.

Mr. St. John to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Ragusa, June 20, 1877.*

THE following confidential and reliable telegram has been received:—

"Condition of Montenegro desperate. Turks having won several victories are marching from Nichsich to Spuz. Montenegrins being hard pressed are completely disorganized. Prince's position not known, supposed to be at Ostrog. Telegraphic communication interrupted. Road to capital believed to be open."

No. 376.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 179.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 20, 1877, 11 A.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, I have no doubt that the note referred to in my telegram No. 177 is partly founded on despatch of Count Andrassy, copy of which was inclosed in your despatch No. 177; but I have reason to believe that it also refers to another despatch of Count Andrassy.

I have not yet got a copy of it, as it is thirty-six pages long.

No. 377.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877, 2·35 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 146, India Office thinks there is no occasion for sanctioning the appointment of a Turkish Consul at Peshawur, as Turkey has no commercial interests there, and no Consul has hitherto been appointed to any inland Indian town.

No. 378.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877, 2·20 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 147, you should not encourage the proposed mission to Affghanistan, or hold out any promise of acquiescence in it on the part of the Indian authorities.

No. 379.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877, 3·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to Consul Skene's despatch No. 28 of the 29th May, reporting the proceedings respecting murder of Cavass, urge Porte in the strongest manner to take immediate steps for instituting a proper inquiry into this case with the co-operation of Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo.

Report at once by telegraph the answer which you receive from the Porte to your representation.

No. 380.

Vice-Consul Freeman to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 20.)

(Telegraphic.) *Serajevo, June 20, 1877.*

NICHSICH revictualled and communication free. Suleiman Pasha occupied Ostrog in Montenegro on the 10th, and hopes in a few days to effect a junction with Ali Saib Pasha.

No. 381.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 20, 5·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, June 20, 1877, 4·35 P.M.*

A TELEGRAM received to-day by the Austrian Government from Scutari does not confirm news forwarded by Mr. St. John, but states that both Mehemet Ali and Said Pasha have been repulsed, and that Suleiman, though on Montenegrin territory, is still near frontier and advancing very slowly, subject to severe losses.

No. 382.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Nixon.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877, 6 P.M.*

GOVERNMENT of India have consented to prolong your tenure of your post for two years.

No. 383.

The Earl of Derby to Count Schouvaloff.

Dear Count Schouvaloff, *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877.*

I THINK it right to send you a copy of a report from Colonel Wellesley, which has reached me this morning, giving an account of the manner in which he has been

received on his arrival at the Russian head-quarters by his Imperial Highness the Grand Duke Nicholas. I had already been informed of the occurrence more briefly by telegraph, but I felt that in a matter of this kind it would be better to await the detailed report of what had passed.

I need not say that the Queen has been deeply hurt at the manner in which one of her officers, proceeding, by the Emperor's own permission, on behalf of her Government, to the Russian army, has been treated.

If the Russian authorities consider that they have any ground of complaint against Colonel Wellesley, whether personal or official, it would be only right that it should be made known to Her Majesty's Government, in order that the matter may be investigated, as there can be no desire on the part of Her Majesty's Government to retain at the Russian head-quarters any one who can be shown for sufficient reason to be unacceptable.

But it is surely not too much to ask that while he remains at the head-quarters by the Emperor's invitation, he should receive the treatment which would naturally be accorded to an officer and a gentleman in the service of a friendly Power.

I should be glad if your Excellency would submit the matter as soon as possible to His Majesty the Emperor, as Colonel Wellesley is at present awaiting instructions at Bucharest for his future guidance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 384.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 220.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877.*

COUNT BEUST informed me yesterday that Count Andrassy had instructed Count Zichy by telegraph to inform the Porte that, in reply to a request made to him by Aleko Pasha for explanations on the subject of the transport on Austrian railways of munitions of war destined for Russia, he had stated that the Austro-Hungarian Government would strictly adhere to its duties as a neutral Power, and would not permit this transport, which had not existed up to the present time. He had added, however, that there was no objection to provisions being transported, and that for that purpose these railways were at the disposal of Turkey as well as that of Russia; and he had explained that it was for that reason only that the transport of provisions for the Turkish army on board the Lloyd boats had been permitted, whilst that of troops, arms, and munitions of war was strictly forbidden in the case of the boats of that Company as well as on the railroads.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 385.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 176. Political.)
My Lord, *Cairo, June 12, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 175 of the 10th instant, I have the honour to report that eight transports, carrying the Egyptian contingent, about 6,000 strong, under the command of Prince Hassan Pasha, sailed from Alexandria for Turkey yesterday evening under the escort of five Turkish and two Egyptian men-of-war, two of the former being powerful iron-clad rams.

I believe the destination of the troops to be Roumelia, and I doubt if the Russians would venture to attack so powerful a force.

I am informed by naval officers who visited the Turkish vessels while they were at Alexandria that they were in the most perfect order—as neat and trim as English men-of-war; and that for the first time on record a Turkish squadron has left Egypt without making any requisitions for supplies or provisions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 386.

Mr. Vivian to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 180. Political.)
My Lord, *Cairo, June 14, 1877.*

WITH reference to my Political despatch No. 158, Confidential, of the 3rd instant, reporting certain signs of fanaticism in Egypt, I beg to inform your Lordship that my attention has been called to an addition to the special prayer for the success of the Sultan's arms during the present war, in the shape of another prayer, which is now used by the religious Sheikhs in the mosques, and of which the following is a literal translation:—

"God grant that they (the infidels), their children, their fami" s, and their properties may fall a prey to the true believers."

Although I believe it to be true, as pleaded by Cherif Pasha, that this prayer is generally understood by the natives as directed solely against the Russians, and not against Christians generally, I said that I very much regretted that a prayer should be sanctioned which was quite inappropriate to, and uncalled for by, the circumstances of the present war.

His Excellency quite agreed with me, but doubted whether it was worth while to notice it.

Orders have been given by the police which have stopped the publication of the inflammatory telegrams, purporting to be news from the seat of war, which were being circulated among the natives.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. VIVIAN.

No. 387.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 56. Political.)
My Lord, *Galatz, June 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that a subscription was set on foot yesterday by the Greek subjects in Galatz in aid of the insurrection in Crete, and that up to the present upwards of 70,000 fr. have been subscribed. I am given to understand that the intention is to purchase a steamer to run the blockade with arms and ammunition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PERCY SANDERSON.

No. 388.

Sir A. Paget to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 248.)
My Lord, *Siena, June 16, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a note which, in compliance with your Lordship's instructions conveyed to me in your despatch No. 216 of the 8th instant, I have addressed to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, inquiring what instructions, if any, have been sent by the King's Government to their Representative at Constantinople in consequence of the proclamation of the state of siege in that capital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. PAGET.

June 18.

P.S.—Since writing the above I have received a note from M. Melegari—translation of which I have the honour to inclose—in which his Excellency gives the chief points of the instructions addressed to the Italian Minister at Constantinople respecting the position of foreign subjects under the state of siege proclaimed in that capital.

A. P.

Inclosure 1 in No. 388.

Sir A. Paget to M. Melegari.

Siena, June 12, 1877.

M. le Ministre,

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency, by direction of the Earl of Derby, that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople has forwarded to Her Majesty's Government a copy of the Law passed by the Turkish Parliament authorizing the Porte to proclaim the state of siege in Constantinople in case of necessity.

Mr. Layard, having subsequently informed Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs that the state of siege had been actually proclaimed on the 24th ultimo, and that he had addressed an urgent representation to the Porte that foreigners should be exempted from the application of this measure, in reply to which a promise was given by the Grand Vizier that orders should be issued not to molest them in any way, his Excellency was instructed by the Earl of Derby to inform the Porte that Her Majesty's Government expect that the assurances given by the Grand Vizier will be strictly adhered to, and that in the event of their being infringed Her Majesty's Government reserve to themselves the right of maintaining the privileges of British subjects under the Capitulations.

In making the above communication to your Lordship, I have been desired by Lord Derby to state that Her Majesty's Government would be glad to be informed what instructions, if any, have been sent by the Government of His Majesty the King of Italy to their Representative at Constantinople, with the view of maintaining the privileges of Italian subjects in consequence of the proclamation of a state of siege in that capital.

In the hope that your Excellency will have the goodness to enable me at your earliest convenience to furnish Her Majesty's Government with the information they desire, I avail, &c.

(Signed) A. PAGET.

Inclosure 2 in No. 388.

Signor Melegari to Sir A. Paget.

(Translation.)

Rome, June 16, 1877.

Sir,

I THANK your Excellency for having informed me by your note of the 12th instant of the steps taken at the Porte by the British Embassy, respecting the immunity of foreigners from the state of siege, and of the assurances which were given on this subject to Mr. Layard by his Highness the Grand Vizier.

From the day on which, a few weeks ago, we had the first notice of the intention to proclaim at Constantinople the state of siege, the King's Government called the attention of His Majesty's Minister at Constantinople to the subject; and, when we had received the text of the law, we charged Count Corti to declare that some of the dispositions contained therein were quite at variance with the legal position which the Treaties and Capitulations guarantee to foreign subjects in the Ottoman Empire.

The Ministers of the Sultan have made to the Italian Minister declarations similar to those received by Mr. Layard; but we, equally with Her Majesty's Government, propose to watch that the facts shall correspond rigorously with such declarations. We should consider it opportune that every doubt should be eliminated in such a delicate matter by means of a formal and written communication from the Sublime Porte. In these terms was conceived the last despatch addressed on this subject to the Minister of His Majesty in Constantinople.

Communicating the above for the confidential information of your Excellency, I avail, &c.

(Signed) MELEGARI.

No. 389.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)

Bucharest, June 19, 1877, 3·40 P.M.

THE Grand Duke's language to Colonel Wellesley has leaked out through officers at the Russian head-quarters.

His position is becoming a disagreeable one, and he wishes to receive your Lordship's instructions with as little delay as possible.

No. 390.

Consul Ricketts to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tiflis, June 20, 1877.

RUSSIAN authorities do not name exact route, and wish to pass these people across frontier, leaving them to take care of themselves. This is inconvenient. Please, therefore, ask the Porte by what way and to what place they wish them to be sent. I will then communicate answer to authorities.

No. 391.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

Tehran, June 20, 1877, 4·20 P.M.

I HAVE received the following information from the Meshed Agent:—

"The Russians have made proposals to the people of Karee Kala and Nokohr to declare their allegiance to Russia. The people of these two places have referred to the Government of Boojnoord, and they to the Government of Khorassan, who have referred to Tehran, asking for a reply by telegraph. I have seen Nokohr, and it undoubtedly belongs to Boojnoord."

Karee Kala is on the southern slope of the Akhal range, and is occupied by a branch of the Goklana from Khiva; its possession by Russia will open up to them the whole of the valley of the Upper Atrek.

Communicated to India.

No. 392.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.)

St. Petersburgh, June 20, 1877, 11 P.M.

IMPERIAL Government assent to proposal that Russian Consuls in England should grant certificates of protection against seizure to coal ships on production of evidence that the coal is intended for delivery in Egypt to neutral firms, &c., and have issued instructions accordingly to Russian Embassy in London; this facility is granted with reserve that it shall not establish a principle, and, in case of abuse, be revocable.

No. 393.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 180.)
(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 20, 1877, 8 P.M.

GRAND VIZIER states that he has positive information that there is a secret understanding between Russia and Austria, and that preparations are being made at Gladova for the crossing of the Danube by Russian troops, and for their passage through Servia. Porte is much alarmed, and has asked for explanations of Austrian Ambassador, who has telegraphed to Vienna, and of the Servian Agent.

Sent to Belgrade.

No. 394.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 181.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 21, 1877, 1 A.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of to-day, I have already told the Grand Vizier the Indian Government would probably not wish a Turkish Consul to be appointed at Peshawur, and the request will not, I think, be repeated.

No. 395.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 182.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 21, 1877, 10·45 A.M.*

I WAS authorized by the Viceroy of India to inform the Sultan that the Envoy whom he had appointed to go to Affghanistan would be guaranteed a passage through India to the Affghan frontier. It will now be very awkward, and will produce a very bad effect, to inform the Sultan that the Indian authorities will not acquiesce in mission. What do you wish me to do under the circumstances?

No. 396.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Berlin, June 21, 1877, 4 P.M.*

TURKISH Chargé d'Affaires here has received privately, from the Grand Vizier, the offer of, and has accepted, the post of Envoy at Teheran.

No better choice could be made. He is conciliatory and moderate.

No. 397.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 21.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, June 21, 1877.*

THERE appears to be no foundation whatever for report mentioned in my despatch No. 116 of June 14.

No. 398.

*The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.**

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 21, 1877.*

TELL Colonel Wellesley that his despatch of the 12th instant was received yesterday. I at once communicated the substance of it to the Russian Ambassador, telling him that the Queen is deeply hurt at the manner in which one of her officers attending Russian army with Emperor's permission has been treated.

I said that if the Russian authorities have any ground of complaint against him, personal or official, it should be stated, as Her Majesty's Government have no desire to retain at Russian head-quarters any one shown for sufficient cause to be unacceptable; but while he remains he should be treated as an officer and a gentleman in the service of a friendly Power.

I begged his Excellency to submit the matter at once to the Emperor.

The Russian Ambassador has been here to-day. He says that too much importance should not be attached to hasty language of Grand Duke, and that he has telegraphed to the Emperor, and hopes that he will succeed in getting matters satisfactorily settled.

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* Repeated to St. Petersburgh.

No. 399.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 21, 1877, 5·15 P.M.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 422 of May 8, Ricketts reports that Russian authorities are ready to let the sixty-three Turks go across frontier to Batoum. He asks if Porte will issue instructions for their reception at some particular outpost, the name of which should be telegraphed to him.

No. 400.

The Earl of Derby to Count Beust.

M. l'Ambassadeur, *Foreign Office, June 21, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to state to your Excellency, in reply to your note of the 2nd instant, that Her Majesty's Government are not at present in possession of proof that the blockade of the Russian ports in the Black Sea by the Turkish naval forces is not effective within the meaning of the Declaration of Paris. Representations that the blockade is not effective have, indeed, been received from certain quarters, and the attention of Her Majesty's Ambassador has been called to the subject, but no case has arisen which has required the interference of Her Majesty's Government.

As the efficiency of blockades depends upon the circumstances of each individual case, Her Majesty's Government regret that they are not in a position to give any definite opinion upon the questions raised generally in your Excellency's note.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 401.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lennox, R.E., to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 85.)
My Lord, *Shumla, June 5, 1877.*

I REGRET that I have not yet been able to get out an accurate distribution, or even list, of the Turkish army available against the Russian attack in Europe, but I give an approximate detail:—

	Nizam and Redif Battalions.	Mustahfiz Battalions.	Total Battalions.	Squadrons of Cavalry.	Batteries of Artillery.	Companies of Engineers.
Widdin Corps—						
Widdin, Lom Palanka, Rahovo and cordon ..	55	4	59	6	11	1
Sofia—						
Nisch	8	..	24	5	3	1
Orchanie					1	
Sofia	16	..				..
Rustchuk Corps—						
Nicopoli	6	..	42	1	8	..
Plevno	..	..		1		..
Sistow	1	2		..		..
Rustchuk	31	2		1		..
Silistria—						
Tutrokan	6	..	20	1	1½	..
Silistria	10	4		2	4½	1
Dobrudscha—						
Stations unknown ..	8	2	10	6	1½	..
Varna—						
Varna	12	..	12	..	3½	1
Shumla—						
Shumla	24	..	37	36 or 37	21	..
Tirnova	3	..				..
Various—						
Aidos	3	..	?31 or 37	..	1	..
Debsol	1	..		..	..	..
Yambeli	? 1	..		..	..	..
Adrianople	5	..		..	..	..
Stations unknown ..	11 or 17	? 10		..	..	? 10
Totals	230 or 236	? 24	254 or 260	56 or 60	58	? 14

As regards the Mustahfiz, knowing that they have been called out in the 2nd Orden, I have assumed that the Mustahfiz battalions of the Merkez of the first three regiments which are towns of Bulgaria, are available.

The Mustahfiz that I have heard of number from 1,200 to 1,400 men; and, for purposes of comparison, I have assumed that the Mustahfiz of each Merkez has been formed into two battalions, as I know has been the case in several instances.

As regards the Engineers, I have given the same total as in previous reports; but I fear I was misinformed as to the companies in the 1st Orden having been doubled—at all events, I have not been able to find companies at places they were said to be at.

With reference to the disposition of the troops, I was in hopes, when first I came to the Danube vilayet in April last, that the large number of troops at Shumla, Rustchuk, and Silistria, were only there for the purpose of finishing the works, and that from them an operating army would in due time be formed.

From all I hear now (though I cannot say that I receive any information from the Turkish Commanders as to their plans), I fear that the present distribution is the one the Turks have decided to adopt permanently. At all events, war has now been declared for six weeks, and there are not any signs of any redistribution of the troops.

As at present arranged, the Turks have at the outside the following forces available for operations to the north of the Balkans, and these detached corps cannot readily be united for joint operations owing to the distances alone, and quite apart from any consideration of the want of mobility of the troops:—

	Divisions.	Battalions.	Squadrons.	Batteries.
Available from—				
Widdin	2 3	48	6	10
Rustchuk	1	16	..	5
Silistria	1	16	..	5
Shumla	2	32	36	10
Total	7 7	112	42	30

As regards Widdin, I have not been there or seen any plan of the place. It is, however, described as "not commanded on any side," and of an "unusually strong profile," and I have assumed above that it might be held by seven battalions of infantry and four of Mustahfiz, mustering say 8,000 men.

If from political reasons it is certain that the Russians will not pass the Danube by way of Servia, it does not appear to be a wise arrangement to keep such a large force at Widdin, where it will be entirely cut off from the rest of the army. The Russians will probably have to detach a corps to observe Widdin, but the advantage this will be to the Turks is not nearly so great as that they would derive from having the forty-eight battalions at Widdin to add to their field army.

The other probable lines of Russian advance are by the Dobrudcha, by Totrokan, and by Sistow, Nikopoli, or Rahova.

At present it appears doubtful whether England may not take arms against the Russians, and therefore it is most improbable that the Russians will endeavour to pass between Varna and Shumla, when they would have their communications within striking distance of a British force landed at Varna. It may be presumed, however, that the Russians will occupy the Dobrudsha, and from their movements on the Danube (reported in my letter No. 77, of 1st June, 1877,) it appears probable that they intend to cross near Braila. The occupation of the Dobrudcha will secure their railway communications in their most vulnerable place between Braila and Galutz. The climate of the Dobrudcha has probably improved since the last war (see Lieutenant Chermside's report forwarded with my letter No. 69 of 18th ultimo.

The movements opposite Totrokan and Nikopoli also lead one to suppose that it is intended to effect the passage of the Danube at those places. I presume that the Turkish troops stationed there are only intended to prevent a bridge being made unopposed at the only points where I imagine it is possible to form a bridge in the present flooded state of the Danube and its banks, and that the Turks do not dream of holding those places permanently, even though they are throwing up land defences at Sotrokan. When the Russians have crossed in force the Turks at these places will, it is presumed, endeavour to fall back upon Silistria and Rustchuk respectively.

Having crossed the Danube in force, the Russians, it may be assumed, will attack Rutschuk, as the capture of that place, owing to its position with regard to the railway communication from Russia to Giurgevo, would be of the greatest use to them. The capture of Rustchuk would also enable the Russians to make use of the railway from Rustchuk for the provisioning of any force they may have to leave to observe Shumla.

By the present disposition, the Turks have only the corps of 32 battalions from Shumla to move against the Russians, and that must be admitted to be a very insignificant force, in comparison with what the Russians may cross with.

I will give a few remarks here as to the general efficiency of the Turkish army.

First, as regards staff. There is a great deficiency of staff officers, the headquarter staff is very small, and regular divisional staffs can scarcely be said to exist. At Rustchuk there were 3 real staff officers for the whole force of 34 battalions; at Silistria, only 1 staff officer; at Totrokan, 1, with an untrained assistant; at Shumla there appears to be so great a dearth of staff officers, that they are even employing the Europeans in their service, which is, I understand, unusual. As to the efficiency of the staff officers, many of them are Turks of the old school, and others are inexperienced young men fresh from the military school. Altogether, I cannot say that I have formed a very high opinion of their capacities. I ought to add that, at a time when the staff officers' own duties ought to have been arduous enough, owing to the process of organization that was going on, they were expected also to perform those of engineer officers, in laying out and superintending the works for the defence of the places.

Cavalry.—There is but little cavalry, but that I believe to be efficient, and well mounted. There is an almost utter absence of cavalry on or near the frontier, and there are only 36 squadrons (6 regiments) at Shumla. The need of cavalry is urgent. On the 20th May (four weeks after war was declared), I was informed that the Circassians, whose number was to be, I fancy, 10,000, were to arrive in two or three days, but up to the present time I understand only 300 or 400 have been got together, and they must require training; so, any way, it appears again to be a case of too late, unless the Russians delay much longer their crossing.

Artillery.—The Turks have nearly 2½ guns per 1,000 infantry. The guns are Krupp's, some of them of the latest pattern, viz., that of 1874, of which they have recently bought 200 of 9·2 centim. They have also, I understand, lately purchased 500 of the former pattern of 9·2 centim. Krupp's guns. The Turks say that the newer pattern have a range of 7,000 mètres, or 1,000 more than the older pattern. The gunners are reputed to be good shots, and I have seen several with the marksman's badge; whether they are all acquainted with their arm, and whether all batteries have practised with it, I cannot ascertain. The artillery seem fairly horsed, but are badly off for ammunition waggons, there being only two, or occasionally three, per battery.

Engineers.—There appears to be very few engineer soldiers, or pioneers, and an immense amount of work to be done at which they could be most usefully employed.

Infantry.—The men are, for the most part, fine, healthy men, and seem to possess the well-known admirable characteristics of the Turkish soldier. They are badly clothed and shod, but armed with the Martini-Henry rifle. They are reported to have all gone through a course of ball-practice, and to be good shots. As the practice is said to have taken place before the arrival of the battalions at the theatre of war, I have no means of verifying the statement, but imagine it can only be partially true.

As regards the infantry officers, those for many of the Redif battalions are merely non-commissioned officers from the Nizam. It is not to be expected that many of them will be found to possess the intelligence and amount of education requisite for the efficient discharge of many of their duties.

I have been some time now with the Turkish troops, and without being able to give any good reason for it, an impression is growing on me that they do not intend to try the open field. The movement of the three battalions the other day to Totrokan from Silistria (one of the best appointed places the Turks apparently possess) makes one despair of the Turkish troops being in any way mobile. The small force at Totrokan is utterly unable to move; the six battalions have only 102 bat-animals among them, the regulation number being about 468. When the artillery marched there their ammunition had to be carried in 35 country carts. Part of the troops are shod in very bad boots, instead of in the opankas, or country-made skin shoes, laced to the stocking or gaiter.

All these things combined, and the dispositions and characters of the Pashas, lead

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

one to suppose that very probably the Turks will confine themselves to the defence of their fortified positions. If so, the Russians will only have to leave a force to observe Shumla.

If the reported strength of the Russian army, 250,000 men, is anything like correct, the Russians will be able to occupy the Dobrudsha, to leave a force to observe Shumla and one to besiege Rustchuk, and yet have sufficient men to push on across the Balkans and be at Adrianople before England, if she does settle to take any part in the war, could send her troops to the theatre of war.

The Turkish force south of the Balkans is very insufficient, not amounting to more than thirty-seven battalions at the outside, counting all the troops between Nichsich and Aidos.

The troops at Constantinople, according to my latest information, consist of four battalions of Nizam infantry, say 2,800 to 3,200 men; three squadrons of regular cavalry; three batteries of field artillery; besides Mustaphiz, amounting to, say 7,000 men, but of which fresh battalions appear to be arriving daily from Asia. And corps in course of formation, viz., volunteer infantry, two battalions, 1,400 men; Circassian cavalry, about 200; Polish legion, cavalry, about 80.

I have from time to time forwarded full detailed reports on the fortresses, and I will now sum them up.

Rustchuk is a strongly fortified place, and should be capable of offering a serious resistance to a siege, if well defended, and supposing it to be well supplied with provisions and ammunition. It is an important place for the Russians to obtain possession of, and I should allow sixteen battalions as its garrison.

Silistria was gallantly defended in the last war by 8,000 men, and the extent of ground to be occupied has not materially increased since then, and I should allot ten battalions (exclusive of the Mustaphiz, as at Rustchuk) for its defence. It appears to be well provided with food and ammunition.

Varna is a more extensive place, and is of greater importance, and it is not certainly over-garrisoned with twelve battalions without any Mustaphiz; considering the nature of the position, sixteen battalions would not be too large a garrison. Varna being open to the sea could, moreover, be reinforced readily. Its unpreparedness for defence was lately reported on by Lieutenant Cheruside, R.E., whose report was forwarded with my letter No. 68 of 17th ultimo.

Shumla is an overgrown entrenched camp of nearly twenty-five miles in circumference, and probably, if seriously attacked, twenty-four battalions would not be too large a force to defend it.

But the defence of all fortified places depends chiefly upon the energy displayed by the defenders; and though I should be wrong if I said that I had not met Turkish officers with some energy, yet one cannot but feel that the stubborn defences the Turks made in the last war was due to the energy and thought of the Englishmen in a very great measure; and I begin to doubt whether Turkish leaders of the class they once possessed still exist.

I am, &c.
(Signed) WILLIAM LENNOX, *Colonel, R.E.,*
Military Attaché.

No. 402.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 28. Political.)
My Lord, *Trebizond, June 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Lordship's information, copy of a report addressed by me this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the subject of the passage through Trebizond of Gazi Mehemed Pasha, son of the late Caucasian Chief Shamyl.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

Inclosure in No. 402.

Vice-Consul Biliotti to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Trebizond, June 6, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report that Gazi Mehemed Pasha, son of Shamyl, arrived here on the 2nd instant from Constantinople, and left yesterday for Erzeroum.

He was accompanied by 300 horsemen, among whom some Daghestan Chiefs, and 200 irregular infantry. This battalion was not formed exclusively of Circassians, there were volunteers from different provinces, several Anatatians from the borders of the Mediterranean, some Albanians, and a few negroes.

They received here Winchester rifles, and retained in addition their national cutlasses and flint pistols. All the officers had revolvers, and contrasted by their imposing appearance and dress with the shabby attire and figure of many of their followers.

Shortly after his landing here Mehemed Pasha sent to me an officer of his staff begging me, if possible, to communicate to him such information on the respective strength and position of the two armies as was in my possession. He mentioned your Excellency's name as an introduction for his application to me: did not conceal Mehemed Pasha's intention to try and find his way into Daghestan, and expressed the desire of the Pasha to see me.

I spoke in general terms on the subject of the war, and stated that I thought that the Turkish authorities were in a position to give details; but the officer replied that Mehemed Pasha could not put implicit faith in the Turkish official reports, and did not want, on partial information, to cause a fruitless insurrection in the Daghestan, the consequences of which would be terrible to the inhabitants.

The officer added that, although it was now more difficult, in consequence of the fall of Ardahan, Mehemed Pasha was still confident to be able to cross the frontier, and to leave round him in a short time 50,000 or 60,000 men, but that he would take this course only if he could rely on the Turkish Government providing arms and munitions, and being in the possibility of supporting efficiently with an adequate army the movement in the Daghestan.

As, according to all information, the Turkish forces in Asia are not in a position to support an insurrection in the Caucasus, it is most likely that the present expedition of Mehemed Pasha will be limited to the head-quarters of the Fourth Army Corps.

There was no exchange of visits between Mehemed Pasha and myself; but at the moment of his departure he sent the same officers whom I had already seen to express his regret at his not having been able to call on me during his short stay here.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ALFRED BILIOTTI.

No. 403.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 31. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June 7, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I have written to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, stating the steps I took to induce the Cretan Christians to consent to elect a member to represent them in the Imperial Parliament, and to forego their scheme of demanding British protection.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

Inclosure in No. 403.

Consul Sandwith to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Canea, Crete, June 7, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to receive, on the 5th instant, your Excellency's despatch of the 26th ultimo, in which, referring to my communication of the 10th ultimo, you

observe that the Cretans might retain their organic and local laws whilst sending Deputies to the Imperial Parliament, as has been done in other countries, and you instance the Basque Provinces of Spain, which, while retaining their "fueros," sent members to the Cortes. If Turkey, your Excellency continues, is to be held together and to be reformed, you consider it to be of the greatest importance to maintain a Parliament in which Representatives from all parts of the Empire can freely express their opinions and state their grievances.

When I received this despatch I thought I could not do better than communicate its contents to those whom it immediately concerned, and accordingly on the following day I invited three of the leading Christian Deputies of the Cretan General Assembly to call upon me. Besides wishing to explain to them the subject of your Excellency's despatch, I thought the opportunity a good one for making another attempt to induce them to renounce their scheme of erecting their island into a Principality under British protection.

I began, therefore, by reminding them that when on a late occasion they had conveyed to me, in the name of their Christian colleagues of the General Assembly, their desire that the Island of Crete should be placed under British protection, I had told them that the instructions given me by Her Majesty's Government were opposed to any such idea, and that they must also be aware that on other occasions I had used similar language to several of the native Chiefs. To this my hearers signified their assent.

"I find, notwithstanding," I went on to say, "from information which I believe to be correct, that it is still the intention of the Christian Islanders to adhere to their original plan, by putting forth a manifesto in which Her Majesty's Government is to be invited to assume the Government over them. Now you must be aware," I continued, "that Her Majesty's Government is bound by Treaty to respect the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and therefore, it is your wisest course to give up your notion of obtaining English protection which will only end in disappointment."

On the mention of the Treaty one of the members objected that as the Turkish Government had failed to keep the Treaty of Paris by neglecting to carry out the reforms which it had engaged in that instrument to undertake, the Treaty was virtually at an end. I reminded my hearers that although that was an argument employed by some, it was essential that they should understand that it was not the view held by Her Majesty's Government, which continued to adhere to that Treaty, and that I, as the servant of the Government, was communicating to them its views. I then told them that I had yesterday received a despatch from your Excellency to whom I had stated their fears that the Porte, by inviting them to send deputies to the Ottoman Parliament, intended to revoke the Organic Law of 1867, and I then proceeded to translate to them, through the Vice-Consul, your Excellency's despatch, a résumé of which is given above. I called their particular attention to your Excellency's words, "If the Ottoman Empire is to hold together and to be reformed," in order that they might see that the policy of Her Majesty's Government as to the maintenance of the integrity of Turkey had undergone no change. One of the members then remarked that it was useless sending a deputy to represent them in the Parliament at Constantinople, as they had seen from the reports of its proceedings published in the newspapers that the Christian members had not freedom of speech, for when on a late occasion a Christian had ventured to express opinions unpalatable to the Government the President had ordered him to be silent. He then expatiated with the eloquence of real feeling on the faithlessness of their Government, and on the hopelessness of any improvement for their brethren as long as they continued under its blighting influence, and he ended by declaring that as for themselves their resolution was taken, that though at present the policy of the English Government might be unfavourable to their aspirations, they trusted to the great and generous English nation not to abandon them in their efforts at ameliorating their lot. I took pains to assure them that Her Majesty's Government was most anxious to improve the lot of all the Christian provinces of Turkey, but that it is of opinion that that can best be done by insisting on the Porte carrying out the reforms already promised, and not by plunging into war, the risks and sufferings incidental to which I earnestly recommended them to avoid, and they might rely upon it that the improvement of the condition of the Cretan Christians would not escape the solicitude of Her Majesty's Government. I desired them, in conclusion, to communicate to their colleagues of the Assembly what I had just stated to them, which they undertook to do. On leaving, another of the Members earnestly begged me to entreat your Excellency to use your influence with the Porte to induce it to consent to the modifications of the Organic Law proposed by the Christian moiety of the General

Assembly. This I readily consented to do, and I now fulfil my promise by venturing to call your Excellency's attention to this particular request.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 404.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 33. Political.)

Canea, Crete, June 10, 1877.

My Lord,

ALTHOUGH it is the evident interest of the local Government to do all in their power to satisfy the Christians in this Island, and to prove to them that the renewed promises given in the Constitution as to the equal rights of all Ottoman subjects is not a mere pretence, I can discover no desire to give effect to them. I will mention, in support of my statement, an example just furnished me by the Consular Agent at Rethymo, of a law-suit between a Mussulman and a Christian, concerning a debt of 50,000 piastres, due by the former to the latter. It was first tried in Rethymo three years ago, when a sentence was given in favour of the Mussulman, whose adversary thereupon appealed to the Tribunal in Canea, when the sentence was reversed, and the Mussulman made a final but unsuccessful appeal to the High Court of Justice in Constantinople. After three years' litigation it is now found impossible to execute the sentence, the Mussulmans in Rethymo being in collusion with the authorities to prevent the law being carried out. Again, the Commercial Court in that town has for its President an ignorant, illiterate man, who was formerly a guardian of the Custom-house, receiving his shilling a-day, and who has justified the opinion held of him by recently falsifying a sentence passed by the Court over which he presides. The Government, notwithstanding, retains him in his post.

Samih Pasha's dealings with the Christian Deputies of the General Assembly are not marked either by tact or dignity. Some of them waited on his Excellency a few days ago to beg him to telegraph to the Grand Vizier to give a reply to their demands, but he received their petition with uncalled-for levity, telling them that his Highness would think he had parted with his senses if he were to distract his attention with such a matter when so many more important interests were pressing for a solution, but they were at liberty to telegraph themselves. "Besides," his Excellency added, "if you expect your demands to be granted you should do something for your Government. Go and raise 1,000 volunteers to fight our common enemy, and I will supply them with arms and send them to the seat of war." Such language is altogether out of harmony with the serious nature of the crisis and can serve no useful purpose.

The leading men of both communities were yesterday summoned to the Governor's residence, when an appeal was made to them to raise subscriptions in support of the war. The Christians, with the Bishop at their head, respectfully declined to undertake such a task, and the Pasha has been obliged to appoint, with this object, a Committee formed of creatures of the Government, who will themselves, with the few Christian functionaries, be the only contributors. The independent spirit which prevails I may further illustrate by the failure of the Pasha to have prayers read in the churches for the success of the Turks in the present war. His Excellency, on the outbreak of hostilities, wrote officially to the Bishop to request him to offer up prayers in his church for "the glory and prosperity of the Ottoman Empire." The Bishop, who is a timid man, felt himself obliged to ignore the letter, being well aware that the offering up of such a prayer would be the signal for the worshippers to leave the church.

The attitude of the Mussulman population in Canea towards the Christians continues to be insolent and aggressive, though it has not passed into overt acts of violence. Their haughty temper is in my opinion directly traceable to a revival of the old spirit of domination which the present war has quickened into activity. They are so profoundly ignorant of the relative strength of Russia and of their own country, that they have no difficulty in believing in the near approach of the time when, having beaten their enemies, they can treat the Ghiaours, as they continue to call the Christians amongst themselves, as their forefathers did. The only item of news unfavourable to the Turks which has hitherto reached this island has been that of the capture of Ardahan, which had the effect of at once humbling the Moslems; but the

rumour of its recapture quickly restored their confidence, and they still continue to believe that the Turkish arms are prospering both in Asia and in Montenegro, a deduction derived from an uncritical perusal of Bordeano's telegrams, and of boastful articles in the Constantinople press. The arrival of to-morrow's steamer may tend to undeceive them. I merely notice these things in order to point out that adversity improves the character of the Mussulman in his relations with the Christians, whereas, in the most unlikely event of the Porte coming out of this conflict with Russia triumphant, I foresee that the position of the Christians in this Island would undergo a change greatly for the worse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 405.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 18. Political.)
My Lord, *Adrianople, June 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I have to-day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador, relative to a short visit to Constantinople made by the Vali and to his Excellency's audience of the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 405.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Adrianople, June 8, 1877.*

WITH reference to my cyphered telegram to your Excellency of the 4th instant, I have the honour to report that the Vali of Adrianople returned hither on the 6th.

His Excellency informs me that the object of his visit to Constantinople was that of concerting measures with the "Malieh" for the collection of the coming tithes. The crops, favoured by exceptionally propitious weather, are in a forward condition, and promise a very abundant yield. The revenue from this source for the present year is consequently estimated by the Vali at over 2,000,000*l.* Turkish for the whole of the vilayet.

Ali Pasha tells me that he was received in an affable manner by the Sultan, who put to him many questions about the condition of this Vilayet, and the state of feeling between the different sections of the population, showing that the Sovereign takes a lively and intelligent interest in all his subjects without distinction.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 406.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 585.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 8, 1877.*

THE Bulgarian deputy who was commissioned by the Turkish Parliament to inquire into the state of affairs in the Dobrudja, has returned, and describes the condition of that district as very bad, the Circassians and Tartars plundering and committing outrages in all directions, even upon German colonists. I am strongly urging the Turkish Government to recall the present Governor and to take energetic measures for the restoration of order, and they have promised to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 407.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 587.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 9, 1877.*

I MENTIONED to your Lordship in my despatch No. 585 of yesterday's date that the disturbed state of the Dobrutscha had been the subject of discussion in the Turkish Chambers, and that Demitraki Effendi, a Christian Bulgarian Deputy, and a Mussulman Commissioner, had been sent out to that district to report upon its condition. I have seen the former, who returned two days ago. He informs me that he found the inhabitants, Christians as well as Mussulmans, suffering greatly from the excesses of the Circassians and Tatars, who, on account of the withdrawal of the greater part of the Turkish troops and police, were plundering the villages and grossly maltreating their inhabitants. Some of these villages were deserted, the people having fled to the mountains. Even the German colonists, who were previously very prosperous, have been stripped of much of their property. The crops, which this year are unusually abundant, have, in many places, been abandoned, and an immense number of flocks and herds have been left by their owners. The Governor seemed to be helpless, and had it not been for the energy and activity of a Turkish major, whose name has escaped me, still greater outrages than those from which the population are now suffering, would have been committed.

Demitraki Effendi told me that he had reported what he had seen to the Turkish Government, and that they had promised him that the Governor should be immediately dismissed, and that energetic measures should be taken to restore order in the district.

I am constantly urging upon the Turkish Ministers as strongly as I am able the necessity of putting an end to the depredations of the Circassians in the Dobrutcha and elsewhere as soon as possible. They are, I believe, most desirous to do so, but they have not the means, as they are under the absolute necessity of sending the police as well as the regular troops to join the army on the Danube. The misery and desolation which this war will bring upon the populations of Turkey, Christian and Mahommedan, are incalculable.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—I am told that such is the fear of the Circassians that even Christians and Bulgarians assume their dress in order to rob and plunder with impunity.

A. H. L.

No. 408.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 588. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 9, 1877.*

THERE are one or two newspapers published at Constantinople which are chiefly intended for the Mussulman world outside of Turkey, and are meant to represent Mahommedan opinions and views in general. The "Elgawaib," of which Selim Faris is the editor, is written in Arabic, and has, he assures me, a circulation of nearly 8,000 copies. It appears twice a week, and once a week an edition is issued, comprising the two previous numbers, which, for the most part, goes abroad. The editor informs me that it is read in Egypt, the Barbary States, and India, and that it even penetrates into the most distant regions of Central Asia. Its circulation is prohibited in Algeria by the French authorities. It is English in tone, and has hitherto supported British policy in the East. Of late it has been using its influence to induce all Mahommedan peoples to unite and make common cause against the enemy of their faith, and to help Turkey in her war with Russia. But its language has been moderate, and it has deprecated anything like religious persecution and massacres.

Selim Faris, who is a very intelligent Mahommedan gentleman, well acquainted with the English language, tells me that some articles which had been sent to him by the Turkish Minister of the Interior for insertion in the "Elgawaib," were so violent and inflammatory in their language that he declined to publish them lest they might injure the circulation of his paper. The Minister thereupon succeeded in establishing

two newspapers in Persian, called the "Aktar" and the "Akhbar-dar-el-Khoulafat," which are principally meant for India and Central Asia. A large number of copies are, he assures me, sent to the Turkish Consul at Bombay, and to other Turkish Agents in the far East, for distribution.

All these papers, I am informed, are promoting subscriptions for the assistance of Turkey, and calling upon all good Mussulmans to give her every support, personally and by money, in her struggle with Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 409.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 589.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 9, 1877.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 5th instant, informing me that the Russian and Roumanian Governments have called the attention of Her Majesty's Government to the reckless manner in which torpedoes are alleged to be laid in the Danube by the Turkish authorities, without proper steps being taken to mark their position so that they may be recovered when they are no longer required for the purposes of war, and instructing me to urge upon the Turkish Government to send instructions at once to their military and naval authorities upon the subject, I have the honour to inclose a memorandum of a conversation between Raouf Pasha and Dragoman Marinitch, whom I had instructed to represent the matter to his Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 409.

Memorandum.

J'AI vu ce matin le Ministre de la Marine, auquel j'ai dit que l'Ambassade avait appris que le Gouvernement Impérial était en train de faire placer des torpilles dans le Danube et qu'elle s'empressait d'attirer l'attention du Gouvernement sur les inconvénients qu'il y aurait pour le commerce, à la fin des hostilités, si des ordres n'étaient pas transmis aux autorités chargées de placer ces engins destructeurs, de marquer exactement les points d'immersion de ces torpilles pour pouvoir les pêcher aussitôt que la guerre cessera.

Son Excellence Réouf Pacha, prennant en considération les intérêts du commerce et de la navigation sur le Danube, a abondé dans les vues de l'Ambassade, et se fera un devoir naturellement de donner les instructions nécessaires à qui de droit pour que les torpilles puissent être placées de façon à être retrouvées au moment donné. Au reste, a ajouté son Excellence, "nous avions déjà pris les dispositions voulues dans ce but. Les torpilles que nous plaçons dans le fleuve sont fixes et seront attachées de manière à pouvoir faire explosion par l'électricité. Il sera donc indispensable de les mettre en communication avec un point quelconque de la terre. A cet effet nous avons déjà envoyé sur les lieux la chambre noire avec tous les appareils adaptés à ces mines sous-marines.

"J'ai le regret de devoir vous informer que nous avions commandé au fabriquant Thorneycroft en Angleterre deux bateaux-torpilles et qu'il a refusé de nous les construire, sous prétexte que la neutralité proclamée par son Gouvernement l'empêchait d'accéder à la demande du Gouvernement Impérial. Ce refus n'a pas besoin de commentaires. Il suffira de dire que ce même fabriquant a construit et livré pour le compte du Gouvernement Russe vingt bateaux-torpilles, dont quelques uns ont passé même par Constantinople. Le Gouvernement Russe a déclaré la guerre presque aussitôt après l'arrivée du dernier bateau-torpille commandé en Angleterre.

"Veuillez assurer l'Ambassadeur que notre but n'est pas celui de faire du mal au commerce; mais uniquement de nous défendre de tout notre mieux contre les attaques de l'ennemi."

Pera, le 8 Juin, 1877.

(Signé) MARINITCH.

No. 410.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 590. Secret.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 9, 1877.*

AHMED VEFYK PASHA, the President of the Turkish Chamber of Deputies, informed me yesterday that the Sultan had requested him to ask me whether Her Majesty's Government would have any objection to an Agent, or Envoy, being sent by His Majesty to Shere Ali Khan, the Ruler of Afghanistan. Similar missions to the Ameer, and to other Chiefs of Central Asia, had before passed through India without any obstacles having been placed in their way. But under present circumstances Her Majesty's Government might have reasons for not desiring the presence of a Turkish Envoy in Afghanistan, and His Majesty was desirous of consulting their wishes on the subject.

Ahmed Vefyk Pasha was directed by His Majesty to assure me that the object he had in view, so far from being opposed to British interests, would be very favourable to them. His Envoy would be directed to urge upon the Ameer the importance of maintaining the most friendly alliance and relations with England, and of resisting all attempts of Russia, by intrigue or otherwise, to encourage and cause misunderstandings between the two countries.

Ahmed Vefyk Pasha thought that the Sultan, in case the mission was decided upon, would select for his Envoy a certain Suleiman Effendi, a native of Bokhara, who has already been employed in the same way in Afghanistan and other parts of Central Asia. This gentleman is a native of Bokhara, and has been established for many years in Constantinople, where he is connected with a "tekie," a kind of convent, for teachers of the Koran. He called upon me a day or two ago in company with Abdul Mullic Khan, the eldest son of the Sultan of Bokhara, who, after having left his country in consequence of a quarrel with his father, was kept for some years as a State prisoner at Kashgar, and has recently been living in exile at Constantinople. Suleiman Effendi is, I understand, known to the authorities in India. He styles himself "Cheik de l'établissement d'hospitalité pour l'Asie Centrale." He hinted to me when I saw him that he might be requested by the Sultan to proceed to Central Asia, and that Abdul Mullic Khan would probably accompany him.

I told Ahmed Vefyk Pasha that I did not feel authorized to give an answer to the Sultan's question, but that I would refer it to Her Majesty's Government for their consideration, and would inform him of the result.

The Grand Vizier had previously asked me, as I informed your Lordship by telegraph on the 8th instant, whether Her Majesty's Government would object to the appointment of a Turkish Consul at Peshawur. I have no doubt that this question was put to me in consequence of the desire expressed by the Sultan that he should have the means of communicating with the Ameer of Afghanistan and other Mahommedan Rulers in Central Asia. Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, who had been expressly charged by the Sultan with His Majesty's message to me, did not mention any wish on the part of His Majesty to have a Consul at Peshawur or elsewhere.

There are a good many Afghans and natives of other parts of Central Asia, and, I believe, of India, at present in Constantinople. I am endeavouring to ascertain whether they are here for any special object. Iskander Khan, the nephew of the Ameer of Afghanistan, who has, I believe, a small pension from Her Majesty's Government, informs me that he has offered his services to the Turkish Government, and that he has already got together some forty Afghan horsemen to act under him with the Turkish army in Armenia. He has refused to accept any rank or pay, and will only receive rations for himself and his men, who have volunteered to join their brother Mussulmans in defence of their common faith.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 411.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 592. Most Confidential.)

Therapia, June 9, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Porte issued an order a short time ago that no telegram should be sent in the European provinces of Turkey except in the Turkish language. In consequence of the representations on the subject of myself and some other heads of Missions, this order was rescinded, and telegrams were allowed to be worded in English, German, French, and Italian. A further order has now been issued, prohibiting all cyphered telegrams whatever. I have repeatedly pointed out to the Grand Vizier and Safvet Pasha the great inconvenience of extending this regulation to Her Majesty's Consuls, and the Military Attachés to Her Majesty's Embassy. I urged that either the Turkish authorities must take upon themselves the responsibility of at all times stopping the telegrams of foreign official Agents altogether, or that information would be sent by them *en clair*. In the latter case, as Russia is well known to have agents and spies in every public Department, such information would probably be disclosed by persons employed in the telegraph service.

The Grand Vizier was for a long time resolute in his determination to enforce the order. However, he sent Karatheodori Effendi, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, to me yesterday, to tell me that the measure the Porte felt itself under the imperative necessity of taking was in no way directed against either British military Attachés or Consuls, on whose honour, his Highness said, he had the most implicit reliance, and who, he was fully persuaded, would never abuse a privilege of this nature; but this, he regretted to add, was not the case with the official Agents of some other Powers, who communicated to the Russian Government, to the serious detriment of the interests of Turkey, the information which they were able, through their official positions, to obtain at the seat of war. The Porte, Karatheodori said, were about to issue a Circular absolutely forbidding the use of cyphers. If an exception were publicly made in favour of England, it would lead to serious complaints on the part of other Powers; but, as the Grand Vizier was very anxious to meet my wishes, he would give orders, most confidentially, to the Commander-in-chief on the Danube, that Colonel Lennox's cyphered telegrams should be received. He begged me to request Colonel Lennox to maintain complete secrecy on the subject; for, if it were known that he enjoyed this privilege, the Porte might be compelled to withdraw it if other Powers insisted that it should be extended to their Military Attachés. I telegraphed to this effect yesterday to Colonel Lennox.

Consuls will not be permitted to send cyphered telegrams either to their Embassies and Legations, or to each other. Although, no doubt, this prohibition may lead to inconvenience, in bare justice to the Turkish Government, it must be admitted that, considering the critical circumstances in which the country is placed, and the class of men who fill the office of Consuls for some of the Powers in Turkey, the Porte can scarcely be condemned for having had recourse to it.

The orders against cyphered telegrams are, for the present, limited to Turkey in Europe.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 412.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 593.)

Therapia, June 10, 1877.

My Lord,

IN obedience to the instructions contained to your Lordship's despatches No. 121 and No. 126 of the 17th ultimo, I addressed communications to the Porte on the subject of the instructions given to the Turkish Commander-in-chief on the Danube, and of the notice issued by him respecting the navigation of the river.

I have now the honour to inclose a copy of Safvet Pasha's reply.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 412.

Safvet Pasha to Mr. Layard.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

Sublime Porte, le 7 Juin, 1877.

J'AI eu l'honneur de recevoir les deux notes que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser à la date du 28 Mai, toutes deux relatives aux mesures prises par le Commandant-en-chef de l'armée du Danube à l'égard de la navigation de ce fleuve.

Avant d'entrer dans l'examen des deux points signalés par votre Excellence à l'attention de la Sublime Porte, je crois nécessaire de rappeler qu'en principe la navigation fluviale ne saurait être assimilée à la navigation maritime et qu'en conséquence les règles applicables à la navigation des neutres telles qu'elles résultant des Conventions et des usages internationaux ne peuvent s'étendre à la navigation sur les cours d'eau quelles, qu'en soient la situation et l'importance.

En second lieu, si l'on considère la condition particulière dans laquelle se trouve le cours du Danube, théâtre actuel des opérations militaires, l'on connaîtra facilement que cette partie du fleuve représente un véritable champ de bataille, puisqu'elle sépare deux armées belligérantes exerçant des hostilités l'une contre l'autre.

C'est pour ce double motif que la Sublime Porte a déclaré que le Danube dans tout le parcours exposé à l'atteinte de l'ennemi était placé en dehors des règles internationales et soumis en fait à toutes les mesures que comportent des opérations militaires actives.

Ces éclaircissements seront, je l'espère, suffisants pour édifier votre Excellence sur le caractère parfaitement correct et légitime des dispositions dont la rigueur a pu lui paraître tout d'abord excessive ou non justifiée. Il serait donc impossible d'admettre qu'un navire neutre, prévenu que la navigation est absolument interdite sur le fleuve, pût poursuivre sa route vers un rivage occupé par l'ennemi, ayant à son bord des munitions de guerre, sans encourir d'autres pénalités que celle de la confiscation de la contrebande de guerre, comme s'il avait été saisi en pleine mer se rendant vers un port ennemi non bloqué sans intention formelle de faire acte d'hostilité. J'ajoute que le seul fait pour un navire neutre de se détacher de la rive Ottomane pour se diriger sur l'autre rive malgré l'interdiction absolue de la navigation constituerait par lui-même non pas seulement une infraction aux règles établies, mais un véritable acte d'hostilité qui l'assimilerait à un navire ennemi, ou, plus exactement, à un navire neutre se rendant coupable d'un fait d'espionnage. Toutefois, en ce qui touche ce dernier point, votre Excellence peut être convaincue que le commandant et l'équipage des navires neutres se trouvant dans le cas précité ne seraient considérés comme espions et traités comme tels, que tout autant que leurs actes auraient démontré leur culpabilité et qu'un jugement régulier serait intervenu contre eux. Au surplus cette garantie d'une bonne justice résultant d'une enquête et d'un jugement réguliers, est également assurée aux navires contrevenants et dont la capture doit être invariablement soumise à un Conseil des Prises institué sur les lieux-mêmes.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SAFVET.

No. 413.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 594.)

Therapia, June 10, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a note I have received from Safvet Pasha, in reply to a communication which, in obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 139 of the 22nd ultimo, I addressed to his Excellency on the subject of the interruption of the navigation of the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 413.

Safvet Pasha to Mr. Layard.

Sublime Porte, le 9 Juin, 1877.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

J'AI lu avec toute l'attention qu'elle mérite la note que votre Excellence a bien voulu m'adresser le 1er Juin, No. 52, relativement à la navigation du Danube.

Le Gouvernement Impérial ne pouvait être et n'a point été indifférent à l'atteinte que les mesures nécessités par les opérations militaires ont portée au commerce des neutres sur le Danube, et il n'a rien négligé pour en rendre les effets moins sensibles. Il est certain d'autre part que le mal a été en grande partie causé par le procédé insolite de la Russie, qui en envahissant tout à coup et sans aucun avis préalable le territoire des Principautés et la rive gauche du Danube, et en obligeant l'armée Impériale à prendre sur la rive opposée des mesures de défense efficaces et énergiques, n'a point laissé au commerce international le temps et les moyens de sauvegarder ses intérêts, et de soustraire ses navires et ses marchandises aux conséquences de la guerre. En tout le Gouvernement Impérial a le droit de se rendre à lui-même ce témoignage qu'aucune mesure restrictive n'a été prise sur le Danube qui ne fût justifiée et commandée par l'intérêt supérieur de la défense du territoire national.

Je m'empresse au surplus de déclarer à votre Excellence que la Sublime Porte partage entièrement la manière de voir du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine tant à l'égard du principe de la liberté de la navigation du Danube qu'en ce qui concerne les mesures restrictives actuellement en vigueur, et qui n'ont et ne pourront avoir qu'un caractère essentiellement provisoire et passager.

L'emploi de ces mesures laisse dès lors les principes et les règles applicables à la navigation du Danube, et qui reprendront tout leur empire dès que les nécessités de la guerre n'y mettront plus d'obstacle.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) SAFVET.

No. 414.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 595.)

Therapia, June 10, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE had an interesting conversation with Yovantzo Effendi Pentzovitz, a Bulgarian gentleman, who was a member of the Commission appointed by the Porte to inquire into the "Bulgarian outrages." He states that his report was so honest and independent, and was so compromising to certain influential persons, that they succeeded in obtaining his dismissal about a month ago from an office of trust and importance that he had held for many years under the Turkish Government. The impartiality of his evidence with respect to the events of last year can, therefore, scarcely be called in question.

Yovantzo Effendi corroborated to me most of the statements that I have on various occasions sent to your Lordship, and which have been derived from trustworthy sources. He attributes the attempts to raise the Bulgarians to foreign agents chiefly from the Bulgarian population of Wallachia, who had, for the most part, been brought up in Russia, and were employed as Russian and Panslavist Agents. He says that they found but little sympathy generally amongst the Christians. Only a few villages where these agents had gained a footing through the schoolmasters and priests were disposed to listen to them, and were induced to murder some Mahommedans. The number of Mussulmans thus murdered was less than 150 he thinks, and not 400 or 500 as stated by the Turkish members of the Commission of Inquiry. He believes in the authenticity of the instructions and proclamations found upon some of the Bulgarian agents, addressed to the Christians to exterminate the Mussulmans, men, women, and children. He says that it was the conviction that such was their intention that created the panic amongst the Turks which led to the massacres of last year. He corroborated a statement made to me by Lady Strangford that the slaughter of the Christians of Batak was principally owing to a quarrel of long standing with the Pomak villages, by which it is surrounded, about rights of pasturage, and that their inhabitants, who are fanatics and known robbers, took advantage of the general disorder to revenge themselves upon the Batak people

Yovantzo Effendi calculates the number of persons slain at altogether about 3,500, including Mussulmans, being thus in agreement with Mr. Stoney.

I inquired of the Effendi as to the present state of the Bulgarian provinces. He replied that it depended mainly upon the Governors. In the Pashalic of Adrianople and the districts of Philippopoli, where there were good and energetic Governors, there was now complete tranquillity, and a very good feeling had been re-established between Mussulmans and Christians. In other places where the Governors were bad or indolent there was a great want of security for life and property. He observed that this had always been the case in these provinces. He spoke from the experience of thirty-five years' public service in them, and his father and grandfather before him had been in the employment of the Porte. There was no ill-feeling on the part of the Bulgarian Christians against the Turkish Government, but quite the contrary. They had much more sympathy for the Turks than for either Servians or Russians, because, although the Bulgarians, he said, had lost their national independence many centuries ago, they still cherished the recollection of it, and felt that, whilst they remained under the rule of the Sultan, they could maintain the name of Bulgarians, and might have a future before them. If they became part of Russia or of a Servian kingdom, they would be completely absorbed, and would lose their name and nationality altogether. The similarity of their language with the Russian and Servian would promote this absorption.

I asked him whether in the event of the Russians crossing the Danube the Bulgarians would rise against the Turks, and whether the Christians would be exposed to a massacre on the part of the Mussulmans. He said that the Bulgarians "were like sheep." They had no wish to rise against the Sultan. They had no arms; and if arms were given them they would not know how to use them. He did not believe that the Mussulmans would fall upon the Christians unless they were provoked to do so by outrages first committed by the Christians themselves. What he most feared was the conduct of two regiments raised by the Russians from the Bulgarian population in Wallachia, in which there were exiles from Turkish Bulgaria, some of whom had been employed as Russian and Panslavist agents in bringing about the insurrection last year. Russia intended that these regiments should accompany her army into Bulgaria for the purpose of raising the Bulgarians, or obtaining their help. The Effendi feared that they were inspired by fanatical feelings of hatred against the Mahomedans; and might commit outrages upon them for which there would be frightful acts of retaliation. The Mussulman and Christian population, he said, had for centuries lived peacefully and quietly together; but if the Mahomedans were alarmed for their faith and existence they might turn upon the Christians, and the results would be terrible to contemplate.

I was so much struck by what Yovantzo Effendi told me that I begged him to make a memorandum for me on the subject, which he promised to do.

I may mention that one of the accusations got up against Yovantzo Effendi on account of the unfavourable character of his report as to certain Turkish functionaries is that he himself aimed at becoming the Prince of an autonomous Bulgaria.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 415.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 596.)

Therapia, June 11, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 587 of 8th instant, I have the honour to state that the Grand Vizier, on my representing to him the state of the Dobroudja, and the necessity of taking immediate measures to prevent the excesses committed by Circassians and Tartar marauders there, informed me that immediate steps would be taken for sending a police force of 400 men to the district, for the security of life and property.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 416.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 597. Confidential.) *Therapia, June 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

MY attention has been for some time called to the unusual number of Indians and natives of the Central States of Asia who are now in Constantinople. Amongst them are, as I have informed your Lordship, the son of the Khan of Bokhara, Iskender Khan, the nephew of the Emir of Afghanistan, and other persons of distinction. I am informed by Her Majesty's Consul-General that several Mahommedans, who appear to have been compromised in the mutiny and have since been living at Mecca, have recently presented themselves at the Consulate for registration as British subjects.

The result of the inquiries that I have made, with regard to the presence of these persons here, leads me to suspect that one of their objects is to endeavour to bring about a kind of league of all Mahommedan States for the defence of the Mussulman faith, which they believe to be threatened by Russia. It is against this Power that their efforts are chiefly directed. The Turkish Government are, I am assured, in communication with these persons, and are encouraging and promoting their views, and endeavouring to establish direct relations with the different Mahommedan States, and populations of Asia and Africa. I have not yet been able to obtain any positive proof of the actual existence of this secret league or confederation, but I have no doubt that an attempt is being made, with what prospect of success I cannot say, to form it.

Some letters from Mahommedans of influence and distinction residing at Mecca and Constantinople, which, I am assured, allude to it, have been shown to me. I inclose specimens of them. They do not appear to me to be very clear, or to afford much information on the subject.

Mr. Sandison, whom I directed to make inquiries into this matter, was given to understand some time ago that an attempt would be made by the Porte, through some of the persons to whom I have referred, to combine a plan to bring about a rising in India, in the hope that England, in view of the danger, might be induced to take part in the war for the defence of Turkey against Russia.

It is believed that this idea was started, and much encouraged, by Midhat Pasha. The late Grand Vizier said to Mr. Sandison last year, when speaking of the consequences of a foreign invasion, that "there appeared to be a crusade getting up against the Mussulmans of Turkey, who were to be hunted down, and driven out of Europe, but this," His Highness observed, "would not be accomplished without some resistance, and fatal consequences to the Christians, of whom few would be found surviving by the time that the European Powers would be prepared to pour in their armies for their protection. But," he added, "we shall meet with deep sympathy in other Mahommedan countries, and probably in India too."

The present Grand Vizier also remarked not long ago to Mr. Sandison: "We have agents who are working for us in many distant countries" (nous avons des émissaires qui agissent pour nous dans beaucoup de pays lointains).

As far as I can ascertain, there is no feeling amongst Mussulmans against the British rule in India. On the contrary, they profess to believe it to be good and just, and would be content to live peaceably under it. But there is a bitter hatred and resentment against Russia, who is accused of not only endeavouring to destroy and absorb into her vast Empire all the Mahommedan States of Central Asia, but to extirpate the Mussulman religion. This conviction is increased by the stories current here as to the persecution of the Mussulman populations in the Caucasus, the Crimea, and elsewhere, who have, it is alleged, been treated with the utmost cruelty because they have refused to abandon their religion.

I am continuing my inquiries on the subject to which this despatch refers, and shall endeavour to obtain fuller information with regard to it; but I have thought it desirable to communicate to your Lordship, without further delay, what I have heard, as the matter is one of considerable importance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 416.

Meerza Mohammed Bey Ibn Affzaal to the Indian Shahzadeh, Djellal-ud-Deen Effendi.

(Translation.) *Mecca, Djebel Omer District, 17 Moharem, 1294*
(After compliments.) *(February 1, 1877.)*

I HAVE not heard from you for the last year. I am, therefore, very much annoyed.

(Seal) MEERZA MOHAMMED BEY IBN AFFZAAL.

When you receive this letter you will inform me of your intentions, and you will also tell me who is the Minister of Finance, the Chief Accountant, the Grand Vizier, the Minister of War, the Minister of Marine, the Grand Master of Artillery, and the Minister of the Evkaff.

Your brother's wife came here on a pilgrimage with your father and son also.

Inclosure 2 in No. 416.

Meerza Mohammed Bey Ibn Affzaal to Sheik Haydar Effendi Cashmeree.

(Translation.) *Mecca, Djebel Omer District, 17 Moharem, 1294*
(After compliments.) *(February 1, 1877.)*

MY brother Haider Effender wishes to know the names of the Moheim Mushire, the Minister of War, the Minister of Police, the Minister of the Evkaff, the Minister of Marine, the Minister of Finance, and that of the Grand Vizier.

Send me their names, as I intend to come myself to Constantinople.

(Signed) MOHAMMED BEY IBN MEERZA AFFZAAL.

P.S.—Make my compliments to Iskender Effendi as also to the Sheikh of the Indian Calendars. I wish to know how they are. The letters you sent have reached me. We forwarded them speedily to the Afghan region. But why do not you exert yourself also about India itself? How many more years shall I have to remain here, and how much longer shall I and my family have to suffer? Send me the names of the Ministers mentioned in this letter. With God's help I shall shortly come to your place (Constantinople). Do not forget to send me an answer.

Inclosure 3 in No. 416.

The Shahzadeh Mohammed Djelaal-ud-Deen of Constantinople to Meerza Mohammed Bey Laknahorry of Mecca.

(Translation.)
(After compliments)

AS regards the names of the Ministers which you require from me, I have to state that they are public and notorious in every town, but it is forbidden to give them.*

If you contemplate visiting Constantinople, you would do well to defer your departure for some time yet—at all events, until things are definitely known. Former days and things have not laid dormant, but continue to be for ever changing, like chameleon.

Compliments to the Nevab of Ferrookhabaad, Fetfezzool Hussein, the Moid Feiz Mohammed Khan, the Sheikh-ul-Had, Sheikh Hohammed Hussein, Djaffa Effendi, and friends.

I hear that Feroozshah is dead; make inquiries, and let me know the result.

(Signed) MOHAMMED DJELAAL-UD-DEEN,
Chief Member of the Commission of Pera.

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* This would appear to me to refer to some secret provisional Government which directs matters connected with a Mohammedan Confederation.—H. C.

No. 417.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 598. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 11, 1877.*

MR. STUART, in his telegram to me of the 8th instant, which was also sent to your Lordship, states that he has received assurances from M. Tricoupi that "there is no intention whatever on the part of the Hellenic Government of invading Turkey at present," and that, "unless some unforeseen occurrences take place in the Hellenic provinces (? Turkish provinces inhabited by Greeks), the Porte need not apprehend any breach of international duty on the part of Greece." Such is the language held by the Greek Minister here, who adds, however, that, should the Russians cross the Danube, and obtain any marked successes against the Turks, it would be impossible for any Hellenic Government, however disinclined to go to war with Turkey, to resist public opinion in Greece, which would insist upon Hellenic troops and irregular bands being immediately sent across the Turkish frontiers.

I cannot say that the reservation "at present," used by M. Tricoupi is very satisfactory. The Turkish Government cannot certainly rely upon it, and, as they are convinced that it is the intention of Greece to attack Turkey as soon as she finds a suitable opportunity for doing so, they can scarcely be expected to neglect necessary precautions for defence. I understand that they are already taking measures with this view. It is, however, of great importance that they should do nothing which might afford the Hellenic Government a pretext for entering upon hostilities. In my conversations with the Turkish Ministers on this subject, I have urged them, as strongly as possible, to be very prudent, and to avoid giving any grounds for an accusation against Turkey of having hostile intentions against Greece, or the Greek populations in the Turkish provinces.

As I have already mentioned to your Lordship, as far as I can judge from what I hear from influential Greeks here, it is not so much animosity against the Turks that would induce the Hellenes to invade Turkey, but the dread that the Sclavic wave set in motion by Russia will overwhelm the Greek populations in this country, and put an end to the cherished hopes of the Hellenic race of being hereafter the possessors of Macedonia, Thrace, and Constantinople. I find this feeling very strong, even amongst Greeks very high in the Turkish service, and who are disposed, for a variety of motives, to be loyal to the Sultan and his Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 418.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 599. Very Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 11, 1877.*

SAFVET PASHA asked me this morning whether the rumours that Russia was not indisposed to make peace had, in my opinion, any foundation. I replied that I had received no information which led me to believe that they were well-founded. Had overtures, I said, been made to him from any quarter on the subject of peace? His Excellency answered that he could not say that "overtures" had been made, but Count Zichy had once or twice sounded him as to whether Turkey would be disposed to come to terms with Russia, and whether, if a favourable opportunity offered for bringing the war to an end, she would be willing to accept the mediation of Austria. He had expressed to Count Zichy his thanks for this proof of the friendly disposition of Austria; but had refrained from committing himself to any kind of pledge in the matter.

As Prince Reuss had just left Safvet Pasha after a very long interview with him, I asked his Excellency whether the subject of peace or mediation had been referred to by the German Ambassador. His Excellency replied that Prince Reuss had spoken in general terms about the war, which, he said, his Government greatly deplored, and had done their utmost to prevent.

The Emperor of Russia, Prince Reuss had observed, could not be expected to listen to proposals for peace from any quarter until his armies had achieved some

signal success, which would enable him to justify to his people the vast sacrifices that they had been called upon to make in going to war. The German Ambassador, his Excellency added, had warned him that when the time for settling the terms of peace came, Turkey must be prepared to resign herself to the conditions which might be offered to her.

I inquired of Safvet Pasha whether Prince Reuss had in any way hinted what those conditions might be. His Excellency replied in the negative, adding that the Prince was "très boutonné," and had confined himself to speaking in very general terms on the subject; all that could be gathered from his language was the impression that Germany intended, sooner or later, to step in, and to arrange, if not to dictate, the terms of a peace with Russia, which, his Excellency observed, he feared would be little favourable to Turkey.

In conversing with Prince Reuss I have endeavoured to ascertain what his views were as to the conditions to be imposed upon Turkey, should Russia, after obtaining a decisive success, be disposed to make peace. He appears to me to think that Russia has a kind of right to Batoum, which, he said, was the natural port for the possessions of Russia in the Caucasus and Georgia. He did not seem to consider that Turkey might also have a natural right to a port which gave access to Armenia, and that Russia had other means of reaching her Caucasian provinces. The Prince argued that Russia has a further right to the freedom of navigation of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles for her Black Sea fleet, which is now cut off from the Mediterranean, and that the interests of England could in no way be affected by the enforcement of this right.

As regards the occupation of Bulgaria or any other part of Turkey in Europe, the Prince seems to think that Russia will not insist upon it, except for a limited period, unless unforeseen circumstances render it absolutely necessary, but that she will naturally require some satisfactory guarantee for the better government of the Christian Slav populations, as she had gone to war for that purpose.

These may be but Prince Reuss' personal opinions and views, but I have considered them worth mentioning to your Lordship, as they seem, as far as I can judge, to be in accordance with the information which Her Majesty's Government have received from Berlin.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 419.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 601.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 12, 1877.*

THE Greek Patriarch yesterday visited the Sultan at His Majesty's request. His Holiness was received by His Majesty with great kindness. He was invited to be seated, and His Majesty, after conversing with him for some time on the state of the Greek community in Turkey, presented him with the Order of the Osmaniyeh of the First Class. This is the first time, I believe, that a Christian Patriarch has been thus received by a Sultan; and I have reason to know that his invitation to the Palace was suggested by His Majesty himself.

When his Holiness took leave of the Sultan, His Majesty told him that in future he hoped that he would come to the Palace whenever he had any representations to make with regard to the Greek community.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 420.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 602. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 12, 1877.*

MR. BARING, at my request, has been good enough to give me a Memorandum with reference to persons who are alleged to have been deprived of their places in the Turkish service, owing to the part they took in endeavouring to obtain the condemna-

tion and punishment of the Mussulmans accused of outrages on the Bulgarian Christians last year. Two of these gentlemen state that they have been dismissed through the influence of Shefket Pasha, who thinks thus to revenge himself upon his accusers. The names of the most prominent persons referred to are Yovantchow Effendi, Haidar Bey, and Aziz Pasha.

Yovantchow Effendi, to whom my despatch No. 595 of this day's date refers, was the Bulgarian Member of the Council of State. He was on Saadoullah Bey's Commission to inquire into the Bulgarian outrages. Throughout the sittings he showed, Mr. Baring states, considerable independence of character, and strove hard to serve the ends of justice. He and Ikiades Effendi were the only members who voted in favour of Toussoun Bey's condemnation. He has now been dismissed from his post "as a precautionary measure," the Grand Vizier told him. He has, however, been given to understand that his attitude at Philippopolis was not favourably viewed by the Government.

Haidar Bey, when Mutessarif of Slimnia, behaved remarkably well during the Bulgarian insurrection, and repressed disorder without having recourse to cruelty. He owes the loss of his place, I am assured, to Shefket Pasha, whose conduct at Boyajikkeui he strongly disapproved.

Aziz Pasha was Mutessarif of Philippopolis when the insurrection broke out last year, and sent several telegrams to Mahmoud Pasha, asking for troops. He seems to have been popular with Christians, and with liberal-minded Mussulmans. He was dismissed a year ago, and is made responsible for the calling out of the Bashi-Bazouks, in Mr. Baring's Report, owing to his name having been inserted at the Foreign Office by mistake for that of Akif Pasha.

These three gentlemen have appealed to me to speak a word in their favour to the Grand Vizier or Safvet Pacha. I have considered that under the circumstances I should be justified in doing so. I found Safvet Pasha, to whom I addressed myself on the subject to-day, well disposed to listen favourably to my representations. He said he was acquainted with Yovantchow Effendi, and had always thought well of him. The Effendi owed his dismissal to the imprudence of Midhat Pasha, who had more than once been heard jokingly to say that he would make a good Bulgarian Prince if there was to be Bulgarian autonomy. This had given rise to suspicions that Yovantchow Effendi was himself aiming at being King or Prince of Bulgaria. I remarked that Midhat Pasha was reported to be somewhat in the habit of making such imprudent speeches after dinner, and that it was hard that Yovantchow Effendi should suffer for one of them. His Excellency agreed with me, and promised to see whether he could get him replaced in his former post.

As regards Aziz Pasha, his Excellency thought that he should have no difficulty in getting him an appointment of Mutessarif, but he understood that the Pasha declined to serve under a Vali, and wished to have a post where he would be independent of such control. It was difficult to find one that would suit him, but his Excellency promised to see what could be done.

Safvet Pasha said that Shefket Pasha had commenced an action against Haidar Bey before the Tribunals for making calumnious charges against him with reference to the part he was alleged to have taken in the events in Bulgaria, and that whilst the matter was before the Courts Haidar Bey could not be employed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 421.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 606.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt respecting the Bulgarian amnesty.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 421.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Adrianople, June 8, 1877.*

THE Vali informs me that among other topics touched upon by the Sultan during his Excellency's late audience at the Palace, that of the projected Bulgarian amnesty held a prominent place.

Ali Pasha states that His Majesty enjoined him to give the matter his best attention, observing that your Excellency appeared anxious that the amnesty should be carried out with the least possible delay. His Excellency observed to me on this head that the Sultan was evidently desirous to satisfy your Excellency.

The Vali explained to His Majesty that he was awaiting the receipt of the detailed list which he had applied for from Philippopolis in order to proceed with the measure conjointly with myself.

The list from Sofia has been given in. It comprises the names of eighteen Bulgarian political prisoners, nine of whom are condemned to hard labour for life; the trials of the remaining nine are being proceeded with.

As regards the list from Philippopolis it is still being waited for. Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, pending a more precise report on the subject, tells me that when he last had information on the subject there were fifty-four unsentenced persons in confinement; that few or none were undergoing sentence in the local prison, and that, he believed, no prisoners had been either condemned or released since he received that information.

The unfinished state of things at Philippopolis may in part, if not wholly, explain the delay in obtaining the desired particulars from that place.

I beg to call your Excellency's notice to the inclosed letter cut from the "Levant Herald" of the 22nd ultimo, and which bears the signature of sixty-two Bulgarian prisoners confined in the "Medrihané" prison at Constantinople. I request your Excellency to inform me whether it is intended to include these prisoners among those whose cases are to be dealt with by Ali Pasha in conjunction with me. If so, I beg to submit that it would be advisable for his Excellency to be furnished with the Porte's instructions to that effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 421.

Extract from the "Levant Herald" of May 22, 1877.

L'Amnistie Générale.

Espérances Différées.

ON nous adresse la lettre suivante:

"M. le Rédacteur,—C'est avec une joie extraordinaire et avec la plus grande anxiété que nous avons lu d'abord dans le "Levant Herald" et ensuite dans tous les autres journaux de la ville que Sa Majesté le Sultan avait accordé une amnistie générale aux détenus Bulgares compromis dans les derniers événements de la Thrace. Aussitôt que nous avons eu connaissance de cette bonne nouvelle, nous avons tous poussé, dans notre prison, des cris de gratitude, et nous avons attendu avec une anxiété facile à comprendre l'heureux moment de notre délivrance.

"Quelques jours se passèrent et quelques Turcs furent mis en liberté en vertu de cette amnistie. Nous attendîmes, et nous attendons encore. Mais voilà que plusieurs jours se sont passés, et il n'y pas de situation aussi triste que celle de l'attente. Nous ne pouvons pas comprendre comment l'exécution d'un ordre de Sa Majesté est retardée de plus de quinze jours.

"En restant pour toujours les plus fidèles sujets du trône Impérial, et confiants dans la clémence de Sa Majesté, nous prions humblement que les hauts fonctionnaires chargés de l'exécution du décret Impérial veuillent bien hâter notre délivrance de cet endroit humide et suffocant, afin que nous puissions prier Dieu qu'il accorde de longs jours à notre Sultan.

"Dans l'espoir que vous vous montrerez généreux envers les malheureux qui souffrent en accordant une place à ces lignes dans votre estimable journal, agréez, etc.

"*Constantinople, le* $\frac{5}{17}$ *Mai*, 1877.

"*Les Prisonniers Bulgares de la Prison 'Medrihané.'*

"1. Ivan Christoff.
2. Cyrille Beteff.
3. Stoyan Zaïmoff.
4. Nicholas T. Obretonoff.
5. Marin Petcoff.
6. Basile Nentchoff.
7. Kuntcho Petroff.
8. Zacharie Petroff.
9. Peter Marinoff.
10. Dimitri Theodoroff.
11. Pentcho Mintchoff.
12. Christo Veleff.
13. Ivan Stoycoff.
14. Rusco Stoyanoff.
15. Peter Ivanoff.
16. Nicolas Petroff.
17. Dimitry Ivanoff.
18. Nicolai Mincoff.
19. Procope Alexieff.
20. Théodore Slieff.
21. Nicolas Vultchoff.
22. Marc Baciieff.
23. Stephen Pope Dimitroff.
24. Stoyan Entchoff.
25. Nedelco Tintcheff.
26. Georges Pentchoff.
27. Pentcho Stamenoff.
28. Sawa Peneff.
29. Ivanitza Dantchoff.
30. Yordan Nicoloff.
31. Ivan Stoynoff.
32. Christo Dimitroff.
33. Zlatan Stoynoff.
34. Stoyan Stoynoff.
35. Krestu Georgieff.
36. Ivan Nicoloff.
37. Théodore Stoycoff.
38. Stanu Georgieff.
39. Paul Boneff.
40. Peter Genoff.
41. Panco Georgieff.
42. Christo Michailoff.
43. Philip Bochcoff.
44. Pope Nedelco Ivanoff.
45. Pope Christo.
46. Gospodin Stanoff.
47. Mito Tashoff.
48. Tuntcho Petcoff.
49. Ivan Pancoff.
50. Marin Gantchoff.
51. Rochco Pantchoff.
52. Philip Krestoff.
53. George Nicoloff.
54. Ivan Gentcheff.
55. Yokim Mladenoff.
56. Angel Reloff.
57. Naüdon Petroff.
58. Nedelu Nechoff.
59. Liben Gantchoff.
60. Damian Ivanoff.
61. Theodor Moscoff.
62. Theodor Petroff.

"Les signataires disent que leur nombre aurait été plus considérable si huit détenus n'étaient morts en prison. Voici les noms de ces derniers:

"1. Pope Cyrill.
2. Zlatan Stoyanoff.
3. Kresto Stancoff.
4. Rat Noracoff.
5. Koltcha Radeff.
6. Mintcho Ivanoff.
7. Koltcha Mledenoff.
8. Elia Lascoff."

No. 422.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 607.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Bagdad, respecting the military forces in that province.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 422.

Consul-General Nixon to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Bagdad, May* 15, 1877.

I REGRET to state that I am unable to furnish you with a correct account of the military force in this vilayat. What is now stated has been given to me by Hussein Fowzee Pasha, the Mushir of Bagdad; but the whole army has been hitherto so scattered and dispersed over the province for the purpose of collecting the revenue, that I can in no way obtain any reliable estimate of the force.

During the last week, however, a portion of the force has been ordered to assemble at Bakoubah, a distance of about twenty miles from Bagdad, and about twenty-four guns have left the city for that place.

In calling out the Redif several disturbances have taken place at Hillah and Kerbella and Duganah, and at Hillah seven men of the regular army are said to have been killed. The shops have also been closed in these towns and in most of the villages of the Euphrates, to resist the payment of the war tax and the conscription. The population, although cultivators, are mostly all Arabs, and of the Shiah sect, and are bitterly opposed to the Turks, who are Sunis.

Two battalions of the regular force (with the exception of 150 men) have been removed from Bussrah to Amarak, a point on the Tigris nearest to the Persian hills. This place is at the confluence of the River Hud with the Tigris.

Information has just reached me that a raid has been made by the Persians on the villages of Jassund, Mundlee, Zerbutta, and Budran, which they have plundered.

A large Persian force is at Mahomerah, of 4,000 men and 6 guns, under command of Hashmoutve Dowlah, an uncle of the Shah of Persia. There is little doubt that Persia is taking advantage of the crisis to distract the Turkish Government.

The corvette "Broussa" has moved from Busreh to the mouth of the river at Fav.

I have, &c.

(Signed) J. NIXON.

No. 423.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 609.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June* 13, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Philippopoli, respecting the feelings and attitude of the Bulgarians and Mussulmans.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 423.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Philippopoli, May* 31, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of my despatch of yesterday's date to Mr. Consul Blunt, concerning the present feelings and attitude of the Mussulman and Christian population beyond the Balkans and in this district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 423.

Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopoli, May* 30, 1877.

I LEARN from a native Greek gentlemen of this town, who has just returned from Plewna, near the Danube, that the Mussulman population of those parts at

present displays a remarkably peaceful disposition, and is even making conciliatory overtures to the Bulgarian population; probably owing, my informant supposes, to the proximity of the Russians, whose tents cover the opposite shore of the Danube.

In this neighbourhood, I am happy to report, public tranquillity continues to be undisturbed. The Mussulmans, though keenly interested in the events of the war, as chronicled in the Constantinople papers, and painfully impressed by the fall of Ardahan, maintain a peaceful attitude towards the Christians.

The Bulgarians, particularly the better educated classes, are ardently anxious for the success of the Russian arms. But nothing short of the actual presence of a Russian army amongst them would, I believe, induce the Bulgarian peasantry of this district to lift a finger for their independence.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 424.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 610.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a copy of a circular note from the Porte, informing me that Consuls in Turkey in Europe, and those parts of Turkey in Asia, where military operations are being carried on, will, for the present, not be allowed to telegraph in cypher.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 424.

Safvet Pasha to Mr. Layard.

Sublime Porte, le 12 Juin, 1877.

(Circulaire.)

VU l'état de guerre la Sublime Porte a autorisé la Direction Impériale des Télégraphes à prendre certaines dispositions spéciales et transitoires en vertu desquelles la correspondance télégraphique d'une station à l'autre de la Roumélie devra avoir lieu en Turc exclusivement. Sont exceptées les dépêches expédiées d'une station quelconque de la Roumélie à destination de la capitale, des provinces d'Anétolie ou de l'étranger, lesquelles pourront être rédigées en Français, Anglais, Allemand, ou Italien. Les dépêches rédigées dans une de ces quatre langues et destinées à une station quelconque de la Roumélie seront également acceptées aux bureaux de la capitale et ceux des provinces Asiatiques comme par le passé.

Aucune restriction n'est apportée à la correspondance en chiffre des Missions des Puissances étrangères destinée à leurs Consuls et à leurs Attachés Militaires respectifs.

Cette faculté n'est pourtant pas accordée à ces mêmes Agents résidant dans toute la Roumélie. Les dépêches adressées par ces Agents à leurs Missions respectives devront être rédigées en clair dans une des quatre langues précitées. Quant à leurs télégrammes adressées à des particuliers ou à leurs collègues ils doivent être exclusivement rédigées en Turc.

Les dispositions qui précèdent, applicables dans toute l'étendue de la Turquie d'Europe, seront également appliquées dans toutes les parties de la Turquie d'Asie où se poursuivent des opérations militaires.

En portant ce qui précède à la connaissance de l'Ambassade de Sa Majesté Britannique le Ministère des Affaires Etrangères la prie de vouloir bien transmettre à qui de droit des instructions en conséquence.

No. 425.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 611.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report from Sir Arnold Kemball on the progress of hostilities in Armenia, and Sir Collingwood Dickson's comments upon the reports of the Military Attachés to Her Majesty's Embassy in Asia and on the Danube.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 425.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 28, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to subjoin two telegrams which I have forwarded to your Excellency since my return from the head-quarters' camp, near Bardez, on the 24th instant.

The experiences of my journey have only served to confirm the opinion I had recorded of the hopelessness of the Turkish cause in this quarter. Monkhtar Pasha confidentially admitted to me that with the troops at his disposal, composed of Rediff of the 3rd class* who had never before been under arms, and in whom he had not the slightest confidence, supported only by three batteries of artillery and no cavalry, he could not pretend to meet the enemy in the field, or attempt to hold his ground after the enemy should commence his forward march. Orders had accordingly been issued to his several columns to retire, the one from Pennek on Olti, the others on Kiuprikeui, so soon as they should be menaced in force. On my remarking that since the relief of Kars was not contemplated, and resistance to the advance of the enemy deemed impracticable, prudence seemed to dictate the timely concentration of all his forces at Erzeroum, in order to provide for the effectual defence of that place, the more especially that operating on so extended a line, and debarred as well by physical obstacles as by the want of means from speedy intercommunication, much less mutual support, his divisions were liable to be surprised and overwhelmed in detail, his Excellency said that he did not dare to brave public opinion at Constantinople and throughout the country by a premature confession of weakness; and, moreover, that such a movement would neither deceive the Russians nor be productive of any practical results; Erzeroum was devoid of provisions, munitions, and defences, and there were executive deficiencies, which both time and means were wanting to supply.

During my absence little or nothing was done to construct the earthworks designed for the defence of the Devch Boyun and the Olti road. Since my return three Mustahfiz battalions in each direction have commenced the work under the disadvantage of intermittent heavy rain to impede their labours.

In short, to judge from the known facts, the conviction suggests itself, that it is not, and never was, the intention to defend Erzeroum. Ismail Pasha, the Governor-General and the chief military authority here, Reis Ahmed Pasha, have now admitted that my estimate of the ill-prepared state of the town to stand a siege is strictly accurate on every point; their only care is to prove that they are themselves in no degree to blame for the desperate condition to which they are reduced. They protest that their requisitions upon the neighbouring vilayets for transport, cattle, and subsidies, and their reiterated appeals to Constantinople, have remained unnoticed and unanswered; if it be true, as they affirm, that they have neither concealed the true state of the case from the Central Government, nor misrepresented the circumstances, the blind infatuation of the Porte, and the delusions it has entertained and propagated, are quite inexplicable, save on the ground of kismet, or a wilful misappreciation of the situation.

In the course of conversation the Reis Pasha remarked that had he been consulted he would have vetoed the removal of the heavy guns still lying at Trebizonde when I reached that port, as he would now stop their further progress to Erzeroum, lest they, too, should fall into the hands of the Russians: to this I could only reply that such

* Forty battalions of his chosen troops (Nizam and Rediff of the 1st and 2nd bans), formed the garrisons of Kars and Ardahan; and 18 mountain guns.

also would have been my view could I have been aware that surrender and not defence was in the minds of the Ottoman leaders. The Reis Pasha's remark, however, merely echoed the reasons (confidentially) assigned to me by Mouktar Pasha for not calling to the front the field battery stationed at Hassan Kalaa and the three batteries (horsed) available at Erzeroum.

It is, indeed, high time that a plan of operations should be determined at the capital, and some final resolution taken for the disposition of the troops, aggregating from 35,000 to 40,000 men, about to assemble here. Erzingian has been mentioned as the sole line of retreat contemplated, but Trebizonde, I submit, ought not to be left uncovered. The road to and the ground around that place possess great capabilities for defence or protracted resistance, and so long as the Turks held command of the sea there would be comparatively little difficulty in providing for the wants of the troops employed in that direction.

I have referred above to the want of cavalry on the Turkish side. The Nizam troopers, though lately supplemented by three squadrons of zaptiehs, ill-equipped and badly mounted, scarcely number 500 men; and the irregular horsemen, I find, instead of 4,000, do not exceed 1,500 men of all descriptions. The Circassians, who compose the great bulk of this force, would be effective soldiers if properly led and fairly cared for. As it is, they act and move as they list, without reference to orders from headquarters; and being without tents in a climate of which the cold is still severe,* and without rations for men and horses, they are necessarily dispersed in small bands in the more or less distant villages in search of food and shelter.

The fall of Ardahan is said not to have been without ill-effects upon the morale of the Turkish troops. From some of the fugitives I learn that the Russians, having concentrated so heavy a fire on the earthworks of Emir Oghlu, distant five or six miles from the town, as almost to raze them to the ground, the garrison, consisting of three battalions, were unable to resist the persistent assaults of the masses thrown against them; and the Commander of the fort having in vain asked for reinforcements was eventually overwhelmed. This occurred on Wednesday, the 16th instant. On the following day the attack was renewed on the *enceinte* of the town, but met with a feeble resistance; and the Commander, Hussein Subri Pasha, was reported to have been among the first to desert his post. I saw his meagre report from Ardanush, in which he makes no mention of the fate of the garrison, or of the troops who accompanied him in his flight. My informant stated that the Russian cavalry followed in pursuit, and slew or turned back most of the fugitives. As before stated, 500 would probably cover the number of those who made good their escape. The other detached fort of Ramzan Oghlu was evacuated on the fall of Emir Oghlu; 1,200 saumers† of grain, some eighty guns, five batteries of field artillery (one horsed), and five or six heavy Krupp, the remainder being siege guns of the old pattern, fell a prize to the enemy. The garrison consisted of ten battalions of Nizam and Redif, and a body of organized local militia.

I cannot yet discover whether it be the intention of the Russians to undertake the seige and capture of Kars, or to mask that place, and march with the main body of their forces on Erzeroum. Sorties and skirmishes with the enemy are now and again reported from Kars, and the Russians continue to push their reconnaissances on the lines of their supposed advance, but nothing is accurately known of their movements, and operations.

From Bayazid, the Russians are reported to have detached a force to meet the division consisting of 6 battalions, with a few mountain guns, and a host of irregulars under Faik Pasha, advancing from Van to create a diversion on the flank of the Russian left wing. Their cavalry are said to have shown themselves at Ardish, and to have intercepted, *en route*, two small convoys of ammunition proceeding to Baghiri to join Faik Pasha.

The Kurdish Chiefs in the direction of Erzingian and Baibourt, after preparing their contingents, affect to have lost control over their followers. These, instead of marching to the front, are engaged in oppressing and plundering the villages, and in levying black-mail in the shape of contributions which have been obsolete for twenty years.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

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* Snow fell heavily on the near mountains during my march to the front, and the nights were bitterly cold.
† A saumer is equal to 600 lbs.

Inclosure 2 in No. 425.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency my remarks and opinions upon the various reports and telegrams received from Colonel Lennox and Major-General Sir A. Kemball since the date of my last letter to you, and also any items of military intelligence as reported from places in the Turkish Empire by Her Majesty's Consuls.

Colonel Lennox's reports, dating between 2nd and 6th instant, reached here a few days back, and some of them were most important and interesting, particularly those giving an account of the condition and distribution of the Turkish army on the Danube, and of the preparations made to resist the Russian invasion about to take place at any moment. According to these reports there appears to be as yet no prepared plan on the part of the Turkish Generals to meet the Russian army in the field after it has crossed the Danube. The great fortresses, it is true, have been placed in a very fair state of defence, and, from Colonel Lennox's remarks upon them, I infer that Rustchuk, Widdin, or Silistria, would be able to hold out successfully against the Russians, provided the Turkish Generals in command of these strong places are men of energy and ability. But it is the misfortune of the Turkish army in Bulgaria that it is not prepared to fight in the field, but all its plans seem directed to the defence of fortresses and strong positions, which, if the Russians have as large a force as represented to be now in Roumania (250,000 men) could be besieged or masked by corps d'armée adequate to the task, and a large and powerful army would still be left for the Russian field operations towards the Balkans and in other directions. Several times, I understand, since (and even before) the commencement of the war, have all these important and vital questions been pointed out strongly to the Turkish Government and War Minister by both Turkish officers of ability and foreign officers long in the Turkish service, but the necessary steps for organizing the army so as to enable it to offer resistance to a Russian invasion with any chance of success in the field have been neglected or postponed; and it may now be too late to attempt to put things in a better state. I confess what I have heard of the present General-in-chief of the Turkish army on the Danube has not impressed me with any confidence either in his vigour or ability. I have no doubt the Turkish soldiers will fight well, and the army on the Danube is, I believe, in a much better state in every respect than that which has been lately so unfortunate in Asia Minor under Mukhtar Pasha; but the want of mobility in the field must tell greatly against it; and if, owing to this cause, it has to be confined to operating on strong defensive lines only, the Russian advance may be delayed, but cannot eventually be stopped. There is no doubt a great change for the better even now could be made were a younger Turkish General of energy and military talent placed in command of the Danube army; and I have reason to believe that, were the Turkish War Minister so inclined, such a man could be found to fill this important command with ability and vigour. I understand that several of the passes over the Balkans are now in a fair state of defence, and the works in others are making progress. Varna, a most important fortress, is very much neglected, and although thirty heavy guns are still required for its defensive works, I understand from Colonel Lennox that they have not been sent up to the 4th instant. By the reports from the Consuls at various places, large levies of troops (Mustafiz) have been made and the men sent up to Constantinople and forwarded to the Danube or to Trebizond. Nearly 10,000 men have passed through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus within the last week or ten days. They have been levied in the Asiatic provinces, Smyrna, and southward of that place, and also in Salonica and other places in Europe. The zaptiehs or police (mounted or dismounted) have also been withdrawn from nearly all the provinces in Europe and many parts of Asia and sent on to join the army to the number of several thousands, and their places in the provinces have been filled up by soldiers of the Mustafiz, mostly old and inefficient men. The war now being carried on in the vicinity of Montenegro is a very heavy drain upon the military resources of the Ottoman Empire, and I believe absorbs and employs a very large force. I was informed lately that about 130 battalions (say 70,000 men) were now in Albania, Bosnia, and employed fighting the Montenegrins. Though the numbers given me as above may be exaggerated, I have no doubt that there must be nearly 60,000 men in these provinces, one-half of which number would not only be a most welcome addition to the army of the Danube, but are most urgently wanted there at this very time. I received a very interesting letter from Major-General Sir A. Kemball, dated May 30, detailing the condition and

movements of the army in front of Erzeroum under Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha up to that date. As you have also perused it I refrain from making any remarks upon its contents; but I venture to point out that as the bad position and prospects of the Turkish army in Asia at present may be considered as entirely owing to want of foresight in preparing and organizing beforehand for the campaign, so the same results in almost every respect may be feared for the army in Bulgaria and on the Danube, unless the Turkish Government and War Minister have the sagacity to see the necessity of changing the state of things in that quarter, by sending a general or generals of their own service who are capable of directing military organization, and of leading armies in the field, to take the command on the Danube. As Sir A. Kemball also sent a long report to your Excellency of the same date as the letter I received (I believe you received it late last evening at the same time I got the private letter from Sir A Kemball), you must be in full possession of all information up to the 30th ultimo, as detailed by written reports, and I believe you have received telegrams from Sir A. Kemball or Consul Zohrab at Erzeroum up to the 10th instant. The situation of Ahmed Mukhtar seems to have somewhat improved, inasmuch that the Russians seem to have abandoned or relaxed somewhat their offensive movements, and have retired from Olti, which is now reoccupied by the Turks, but it is to be hoped that Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha will not extend his troops too far so as to be again in peril of being turned or cut off from his communications with Erzeroum. I always considered it as highly probable that the Russian forces would concentrate their efforts upon the capture of Kars before proceeding to Erzeroum or pushing on too much over the Province of Armenia. Being a very strong place, well garrisoned and provisioned, had the Russian General decided to leave a corps to mask or blockade Kars he could not have done so without leaving behind him a very strong force, say 25,000 or 30,000 men, with a large proportion of cavalry and artillery, and this would have very materially lessened his army for operations in the field, and hence I presume his decision, now being carried out, to besiege, and, if possible, capture Kars. From what I have been able to gather I believe the Russian army of invasion in Armenia to be about 110,000 strong, with a numerous cavalry (estimated by Sir A. Kemball at from 12,000 to 14,000), and a powerful artillery force much superior in number of guns to that of the Turks. We hear that 60,000 men are besieging Kars, and about 20,000 are said to be before Batoum, the remaining Russian force therefore of about 30,000 men, occupying a large extent of country, was manifestly unequal to the task of pushing Ahmed Mukhtar's army too hard, so as to bring on a general engagement which might have been unsuccessful. The Russians have therefore been endeavouring to outmanœuvre the Turkish army and force it to fall back upon, or even to abandon, Erzeroum. It is to be hoped that every effort is being made to fortify Erzeroum, and to prepare and strengthen the strong positions round that city, for it is most certain that the Turkish General must not abandon Erzeroum, but if pressed by the enemy upon that place, he must fight a battle before it; and he could not have better or stronger positions than those around the city. Sir A. Kemball estimates the Turkish army at from 35,000 to 40,000 men; with this force he, Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha, might be able to hold his own round Erzeroum, but he could not possibly attempt to raise the siege of Kars; it would require a much larger and better organized force than he now commands, and, indeed, a more skilful and fortunate General. Every effort ought to be made by the Sultan's Government to collect and send reinforcements to the army in Armenia. I believe at present men are being sent up to Trebizond to join the army at Erzeroum; and the army ought to be raised to a strength of 60,000 or 70,000 men, if it is to undertake any active operations and not have to confine itself simply to the defensive near Erzeroum. Little has been heard about Batoum lately, but the Russians have as yet obtained little or no advantage against that place. I hardly know whether the capture and retention of Soukhoum Kalé have been of any service to the Turks; some 15,000 men with artillery, &c., are engaged there, with very little to occupy them, and they would have been of the greatest service with the army in Armenia; except to hold Soukhoum Kalé and the country in its neighbourhood, they are doing nothing.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Lieutenant-General,*
Military Attaché.

No. 426.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 612. Most Confidential.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 13, 1877.*

I RECEIVED this morning your Lordship's telegram of yesterday's date, referring to the terms which Russia would accept if peace is made before her armies cross the Balkans, and asking me whether, in my judgment, there is any probability of the Porte consenting to those terms. I have telegraphed in reply that in my opinion it would not; and that it would be even dangerous to suggest them to the Sultan or to his Ministers at the present moment. As the messenger is leaving this afternoon I have scarcely time to enter fully into my reasons for coming to this conclusion in this despatch, but I desire to point out some of them, at least, to your Lordship.

The Turkish Government would feel that to form Bulgaria as far as the Balkans into a vassal autonomous province under the guarantee of Europe, the Turkish troops and functionaries to be withdrawn, and the Turkish fortresses on the Danube to be disarmed and razed, would not only be to lay the foundation for the speedy and complete independence of the new province, but of its union with Servia and the other Slav provinces, and the inevitable extension of Russian influence and rule over the whole Slav Christian populations of Turkey in Europe; that to consent to the destruction of the Turkish fortresses on the Danube and the withdrawal of Turkish troops from the new province, would be to give up the main line of defence of Turkey in Europe, and to place the rest of that part of the Empire and Constantinople itself at the mercy of Russia, and that to establish self-government in this province with the support of a national militia would infallibly bring about these results.

The Turkish Government would be convinced that Greece, foreseeing that to create a semi-independent Bulgarian Principality (for such the new province would be) must, sooner or later, lead to the annexation to it of the provinces south of the Balkans, in which there is a Bulgarian population, would take measures at once to invade Thessaly and Epirus and to raise the Greek population in Macedonia, with a view to securing them from ultimate absorption with Bulgaria; that the Hellenes would be supported by Europe, and that a fresh dismemberment of the Empire would then inevitably take place.

The Sultan and his Ministers would further fear the effect upon all the Mussulman populations of the Turkish Empire of handing over to Christian government and influence a large Mahommedan population. Such would inevitably be the result of forming Bulgaria, north of the Balkans, into an autonomous State. If the Sultan were to consent to this under present circumstances, it would most probably cost him his throne, if not his life.

Such is the present exasperation of the Porte against Servia and Montenegro, and such its conviction that it is about to subdue the latter Principality, that no proposals at the present moment for any augmentation of territory to either of them would, I am convinced, be listened to, except it were some trifling cession to Montenegro, such as that mentioned in my Secret despatch No. 510 of the 24th ultimo.

With the augmentation of territory to Montenegro and Servia, Bosnia and Herzegovina would probably be cut off from the rest of Turkey in Europe, and with the new institutions to be given to those provinces, the Porte would consider them as practically lost to the Turkish Empire.

To the independence of Roumania, and the restoration to Russia of the portion of Bessarabia ceded in 1856, the Porte would not probably make any very serious objection, but would appeal to the Powers who signed the Treaty of Paris. She would not, I believe, listen at this moment to any proposal for the cession of part of the Dobrudcha to Roumania.

The cession of Batoum, with adjacent territory, to Russia would be considered by the Porte as handing over to her the key of Armenia and of all Asia Minor; and moreover Batoum is still held by the Turkish arms.

To add to all the concessions mentioned above, the Porte might, as suggested by Russia, be called upon to give compensation to Austria in Bosnia and part of Herzegovine.

No one who is in the least acquainted with the present temper of the Turkish Government and people, with the exasperation which is slowly gaining ground amongst the Mussulmans of this Empire, and with the means that they still have of

inflicting incalculable injuries upon the Christian population, would, I feel sure, hesitate to declare that nothing but the direst necessity would induce the Porte even to listen to these conditions. There is not a Turk who would not see in them the dismemberment and destruction of the Ottoman Empire. No Sultan, no Minister, would dare even to entertain them. I believe it would be highly dangerous for England, or any other Power, to suggest such conditions to the Turkish Government, much more to propose them. It may be stated with confidence that, however secretly they were placed before the Sultan or his Ministers, they would soon become known. There is a powerful party in the Palace, supported by the old fanatical Mussulman party outside, averse to peace, and determined to carry on the war to the very end. They are desperate men, and would shrink from no measures should they believe that terms were about to be imposed upon Turkey which would lead to the fall of the Empire, a general persecution of the Mahommedan religion, and to the ultimate extermination of those who profess it in the European dominions of the Sultan. Whether these fears be well-founded or not, they would prevail; and although I am very far from being an alarmist, I can scarcely doubt that they would end in frightful massacres. Up to the present time the Turkish Government has managed to keep the spirit of fanaticism under control, and has succeeded in maintaining a friendly feeling between Mussulmans and Christians, and in restoring the confidence of the latter, especially in Europe. But it could not continue to do so if the Mussulmans were once induced to believe that their property, their faith, and their very lives were in jeopardy.

I think that it would be highly undesirable, if not actually dangerous to our interests, for England to suggest to the Porte the acceptance of such terms as those proposed by Russia. Any influence we may still possess here, and which may hereafter be usefully and powerfully employed in the interests of peace, would, in my opinion, be utterly destroyed if we were to do so. We should be looked upon as greater enemies to Turkey, and to Islamism, than Russia herself, as false friends and traitors. Whether Turkey could revenge herself by inciting our Indian Mussulman populations against us, Her Majesty's Government have better means of knowing than I have, but it seems to me that there is a danger in that quarter. At any rate, when Turkey is compelled to yield to such conditions as Russia now demands, and which she threatens to make still more harsh and extensive if she is victorious, the whole Mussulman world will be stirred, and the possible consequences of such a state of things must be taken into very grave consideration.

I must apologize to your Lordship for the very hasty and imperfect manner in which I have placed before you these considerations; but I could not allow the messenger to leave without, at least, submitting them, even in their present form, to Her Majesty's Government.

As to the result of the acceptance by Turkey of the conditions proposed by Russia upon the interests of England, I do not feel myself authorized to write. Her Majesty's Government will, no doubt, take them into their fullest consideration.

I may add, that the observations I have ventured to make apply to the present state of affairs. Were Russia over the Danube, and at the Balkan Passes, and were she in possession of Armenia, there might be grounds for forming a different opinion to that which I have now expressed; but, it must be remembered, that up to the present time the Russians have gained no very signal victories, and the Porte is still under the impression (however ill-founded) that it can resist the Russian advance with fair prospects of success.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 427.

Mr. Harriss-Gastrell to Sir A. Buchanan.—(Received at the Foreign Office, June 22.)

(No. 57.)
Sir, *Buda-Pest, June 16, 1877.*

YESTERDAY M. Tisza replied to the interpellation of M. Iranzi, reported in my despatch No. 48 of the 8th instant.

As regards Roumania, his Excellency restricted himself to saying generally that no arrangements would be allowed which conflicted with the interests of the Empire.

As regards the export of arms and the torpedoes, he stated that the former could only be prohibited when the destination was to a belligerent, and that this prohibition included the torpedoes of Fiume.

Another interpellation was then addressed to his Excellency on the Eastern question in general and on Roumania in particular with comments unfavourable to any annexation of Bosnia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. P. HARRISS-GASTRELL.

No. 428.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 112.)
My Lord, *Athens, June 9, 1877.*

I HAVE this day informed Mr. Layard by telegraph that the new Hellenic Government is sufficiently strong to prevent the departure of any irregular expeditions, and that there is no intention whatever of invading Turkey at present, there being in fact no troops available for such a purpose; that the country certainly required military preparations to be made, in order that it might be ready to act in case of need, but that, unless some unforeseen incident should occur in the Hellenic provinces of Turkey, the Porte need not entertain any immediate apprehension of a breach of international duty on the part of Greece.

I was enabled to send the above information to Mr. Layard in consequence of assurances which M. Tricoupi had given to me in that sense.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 430.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 115. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, June 14, 1877.*

IF Her Majesty's Government should consent to consider that there is an Hellenic question to deal with when the time arrives for coming to a general understanding respecting the other questions which recent events in European Turkey have brought into such painful prominence, and to secure for the Hellenic populations the same position and privileges which may be obtained for their Slavonic neighbours, I presume that it will be an important object to England, as well as to Europe, that as fair and defensible a boundary line as possible should be drawn between the two races.

Your Lordship is aware that the boundary line which appeared to find favour with the Plenipotentiaries at the late Conferences at Constantinople was universally denounced by the Greeks as most unjust and injurious to them, and one of their principal causes of anxiety just now is lest the same line should be adopted by the European Powers when negotiations are resumed.

It would no doubt be an impossibility to draw a line which would give equal satisfaction to both races, but Her Majesty's Government might perhaps be disposed to reconsider the boundary part of the question, and to undertake to examine further evidence with respect to it, in order that the Greeks may have no further reason to complain of injustice when the question is finally settled.

If the Greeks are expected to form an effective barrier against further Slavonic encroachments, it will be absolutely necessary to assign to them as defensible a boundary as possible.

I find that I had omitted to call your Lordship's attention to this matter in my despatch No. 114 of the 9th instant, although M. Tricoupi had laid considerable stress upon it in his conversation with me. It will necessarily form an important part of the Hellenic question, for which he requires the support and protection of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 431.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 116. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *Athens, June 14, 1877.*

PHOTIADES BEY called upon me this morning and showed to me in strict confidence a telegram which he had received from Conomenos Bey, the Ottoman Consul-General at Corfu, stating that Garibaldi's son was a passenger, under the name of Florio, on board the Greek steamer which is due here this afternoon from Corfu, and that his object was to offer the services of 10,000 Italians to the Hellenic Government for a movement in upper Albania.

The telegram appeared to impute connivance in the matter to the Italian Government.

M. Tricoupi, upon whom Photiades Bey had called before coming to me, had denied all knowledge of the alleged visit of Garibaldi's son, as well as of the proposal which he was said to intend to make to the Hellenic Government.

As Conomenos Bey seems rather too ready to pick up alarming information, it may turn out that he has been misinformed in the present instance, and at any rate it is not easy to imagine that the Hellenic Government would receive such a proposal as the above with any favour at the present time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 432.

Acting Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 5. Political.)
My Lord, *Smyrna, June 15, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith inclosed copy of a despatch, together with its inclosure, which I addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the 9th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 432.

Acting Consul Joly to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Smyrna, June 9, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith inclosed, for your Excellency's information, copy of a letter which I have this morning received from Mr. Vice-Consul Marato, at Aivali, giving the details of the murder of three Christians, by a band of Bashi-Bazouks, at a spot seven hours distant from Adramity.

Mr. Marato remarks that no active measures have been taken by the authorities for the arrest of the offenders; but as the place where this murder was committed is situated in the district of Balukesser, Vilayet of Broussa, it is out of the jurisdiction of the Governor-General of this province.

I have, &c.
(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

P.S.—Copy of this despatch will be transmitted to the Foreign Office by the first opportunity next week, Mr. Marato's letter having arrived after the departure of yesterday's mails for England.

Inclosure 2 in No. 432.

Vice-Consul Marato to Acting Consul Joly.

Sir, *Aivali, June 7, 1877.*

I HASTEN to report that on the 2nd instant a sanguinary act was committed by Mussulmans in the district of this Vice-Consulate against Christians, Ottoman subjects belonging to this town. The same took place at the forest called "Magnara," about seven hours distant from Adramitz; one of the Christians, Thomas Gagas, returned here immediately, and related by letter to this Vice-Consulate as follows:—

"On Thursday last eight men, in company, left this town on horseback for 'Tchang,' in the jurisdiction of Balukesser, to join there the Bazar for traffic. Four of them advancing some half-an-hour's walk from the others, came down to a village

called "Mandeni" and awaited their companions, when about two hours after one of them appeared on foot half naked and almost lifeless, wounded horribly, and scarcely able of indicating the place where his companions had been killed. He stated that on their way, suddenly appeared before them nine Mussulmans, Bashi-Bazouks, armed as usual, and after having taken away their money, clothes, and horses, took them to the nearest forest, and bound them with ropes to the trees; vainly the unfortunate men promised more money to save their lives. The Turks repeatedly fired at them, and leaving them dead, escaped. The aforesaid survivor not being pierced, was swooned away at the moment of the firing, and seemed quite dead like the others. The names of the killed men are Demetrius Gagas, Giorges Jonabasi, and Panajotti Papi; all their money consisted of 120*l.* Turkish. Their companions brought the corpses to the above village, "Mandeni," and buried them; then passing Adramitz informed the local authority and telegraphed immediately to the Pasha of Balukesser."

It is very doubtful whether the Turks will be apprehended, as, according to the information we got, no active measures have been taken immediately against them by the respective local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. P. MARATO.

No. 433.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Athens, June* 21, 1877.

I AM assured by M. Tricoupi that he has no knowledge of any Greek Agent having been sent by the Greek Government to meet the Emperor of Russia in Roumania, and that if such a step had been taken he must have known of it.

The above figures have been sent to Mr. Layard.

No. 434.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June* 21, 1877, 10·15 P.M.

COLONEL WELLESLEY reports 40,000 Russians at Ibraila and Galatz.

Bridge between Ibraila and the opposite shore will be completed to-night. Crossing of a considerable detachment in presence of the Emperor and unmolested by the Turks expected at daybreak.

Simultaneous crossing in boats from Galatz also expected.

To secure Matchin as point of disembarkation for Dobrutcha force is the probable object of both detachments.

Next probable crossing at Oltenitza, date uncertain, where preliminary Russian artillery fire has already commenced.

A dash will be made on Roustchouk by several detachments crossing simultaneously under cover of siege artillery between Giurgevo and Magurelli.

Main column of four corps will probably cross at a place between Magurelli and Giurgevo right and left of Zimnicea, their probable object being Tatar-Bazardjik, viâ Tirnova.

A Roumanian and Russian force may, perhaps, cross higher up the Danube, with the intention of moving in the direction of Sofia. I believe the following is the actual position of the Russian army corps:—11th, Oltenitza; 13th moving west of Giurgevo to support 8th; 8th and 12th between Magurelli and Giurgevo; 14th acting as reserve of 11th; 9th at Magurelli; Bulgarian legion, 4,000 strong, between latter place and Giurgevo; 7th and 10th at the mouth of the Danube and on the Black Sea coast.

No. 435.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June* 21, 1877.

FORCE that had advanced from Spuz has evidently met with serious defeat. The few troops here and elsewhere are being hurriedly sent to the front.

No details yet.

No. 436.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 183.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 21, 1877, 10·30 P.M.

VICEROY of India appears to attach very great importance to Turkish Mission to Afghanistan, and urges me to get Envoy sent off at once, as he considers he may be of great use.

No. 437.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 184.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 21, 1877, 10·45 P.M.

KEMBALL'S cypher telegrams have been refused by the authorities, but I have had orders sent that they are to be received. Judging from a telegram from him, *en clair*, of yesterday, the Turkish right wing has received a severe defeat, and he is very apprehensive of result.

No. 438.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 185.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 21, 1877, 11·30 P.M.

I AM informed that a Russian war-steamer, with torpedo-boat in tow, appeared yesterday off Amasry, near Heraeli, on the Turkish coast of the Black Sea, and captured two small Turkish vessels, which Russians immediately blow up with torpedoes. Nothing is yet known of their crews.

No. 439.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 22.)

(No. 186.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June* 21, 1877.

I HAVE only this evening received answer to my note about blockade of Russian ports in Black Sea. Substance as follows:—Porte states that there is no foundation for doubts as to its efficacy. The Turkish Government in establishing it has conformed strictly to the Declaration of Paris as to the force being efficient; hitherto no instance has been given of a vessel escaping it; supposing it to be true that small boats and vessels have been able to go from one Russian port to another, this does not affect the efficiency of the blockade. Since the establishment of the blockade no ship of war or of commerce under any flag whatever has entered or left Odessa, and passed the blockading cruizers. The Porte therefore hopes that Her Majesty's Government will not question the efficiency of the blockade.

No. 440.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(No. 187.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 21, 1877.*

ANSWER to my note about the Suez Canal just received. Following is substance:—

Porte assents to view of Her Majesty's Government relating to the freedom of the Canal for all neutral vessels. As regards hostilities in it and its approaches, the Turkish Government state that, as the Canal is part of Ottoman Empire, and has never been declared neutral, they cannot permit access to it of an enemy's ship. They have taken measures to protect the two entrances from the approach of enemy's ships, and they trust that Her Majesty's Government will appreciate the reasons which prevent it surrendering under actual circumstances any belligerent rights of Turkey and any of her prerogatives as a territorial Power. Copy of note will be sent by post to-morrow.

No. 441.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June 22, 1877.*

SPUTZ force having failed to form a junction with Herzegovina corps, fell back yesterday. Has made another start to-day reinforced by all the available troops.

No. 442.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, June 22, 1877.*

NOTHING has transpired here in confirmation of Mr. Layard's telegram respecting Servia. On the contrary, the press appears to believe that a mobilization is imminent to protect Austrian interests there and elsewhere. I shall make inquiries to-morrow, but the duplicity of Austrian connivance at the passage of a Russian army through the Principalities, after having induced the Porte not to adopt defensive measures against such a proceeding, would be too flagrant to be credible.

No. 443.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22, 1·9 P.M.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, June 22, 1877, 11·40 A.M.*

RUSSIANS commenced crossing in boats last night. At 3 this morning firing began, and ceased apparently at 10.

No. 444.

Sir C. Wyke to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Copenhagen, June 22, 1877.*

MR. CROWE reports two Russian ships of war as having entered Baltic, homeward bound. Three more shortly expected bound for Cronstadt and coaling at Kiel. It is not likely that a Russian fleet will now leave Baltic this year.

No. 445.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 22, 1877, 4 P.M.*

UKASE for the new internal loan of 200,000,000 roubles published in to-day's "Official Gazette."

No. 446.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, June 22, 1877.*

I SAID to-day to M. Orczy that it appeared to me impossible, after what passed between Russia and Austria respecting Servia, that there could be any foundation for a report that Russia intended to cross the Danube at Gladova, and his Excellency answered that, so far from Russia intending to do so, he believed the Cossacks were the only Russian troops on this side of Aluta.

Count Andrassy is confined to his bed at Schönbrunn, but I am told his promised despatch to Count Beust will be forwarded to-morrow.

No change officially reported in the situation in Montenegro.

No. 447.

Consul Sanderson to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 22.*)

(Telegraphic.) *Galatz, June 22, 1877.*

RUSSIANS occupied hills opposite Galatz with about 4,000 men; loss reported heavy.

No. 448.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 29.*)

(No. 47. Political.)
My Lord, *Erzeroom, May 27, 1877.*

THE irritation of the Mussulman inhabitants of Erzeroum at what appeared to them to be the supineness and apathy of the civil and military authorities, has, for several days past, been gaining considerable strength, and the quieter and orderly portion of the people are getting apprehensive that this discontent may find expression in acts of lawlessness, which might create much trouble and difficulty.

Friendly Mussulmans kept me informed of what was going on, and I took every opportunity to warn the Governor-General to keep careful watch over the town, but his Excellency could do nothing to calm the people against the discouraging news daily arriving of the continual advance of the Russians, and the as persevering retreat of the Turkish troops without firing a shot. The Mussulmans here believe that the superior officers send false reports to the Government, and conceal the advance of the Russians. Impressed with this belief, a deputation waited on the Governor-General, Ismail Pasha, and requested him to forward by telegraph a petition to the Sultan, in which the position of affairs was clearly set forth, and praying that efficient officers be sent to lead the people against the enemy.

Ismail Pasha received the deputation very coldly, refused to accept the petition, and threatened to arrest the deputation if further steps were taken to make their complaints known to the Sultan.

Finding that they would meet with nothing but opposition from the authorities, the chief Mussulmans held a secret meeting on the 22nd instant to decide on the course they ought to pursue.

At this meeting, several members, irritated by the advance of the enemy and by the want of sympathy of the authorities, advocated a massacre of the Christians and

a levy *en masse* of the Mussulmans to defend the faith. The more prudent, however, overruled these wild ideas, and the meeting decided on making an appeal to me. A member was then privately sent to me to ask if I would receive a deputation. He explained the object, and he told me most of what I have now stated.

I said that any deputation charged with a lawful mission would be received by me.

On the 23rd instant the deputation, consisting of seven Mussulmans (six being Mollahs) came to me. They repeated what had already been stated to me, adding that they had no faith in the present authorities and they wanted earnest, patriotic men, whom they could follow, and that if such were sent every Mussulman would follow them.

They then handed me the telegram they wished to have sent to the Sultan as also their petition. On reading these documents and finding that they made some remarks which I considered objectionable, I told the deputation that certain alterations must be made before I could undertake to forward them, and that they must also state clearly their reasons for appealing to me.

These changes and additions were immediately made, and the deputation left for the purpose of getting more signatures to the petition, and to make a fair copy of the telegram.

Ismail Pasha, having learned what had been done, sent his agents to try and prevent further action, first by threats, then by persuasion, and at last by trying to have the petition stolen. These devices not succeeding, he sent for the chief Mussulmans, and promising to send to Constantinople immediately whatever was handed to him for transmission, he succeeded in inducing them to trust him, the telegram and petition were given over to him, and a Mussulman was sent to me to explain the matter. This Mussulman was evidently much annoyed at this turn of events, and he warned me to be prepared, as he apprehended this change would cause serious dissatisfaction and lead sooner or later to disturbances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 449.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 23.*)

(No. 19. Political.) *Adrianople, June 11, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith the copy of a despatch with its inclosures, which I have addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador regarding the state of the country.

Your Lordship will observe that, whilst there is a regrettable increase of disorders in this vilayet, none of the outrages reported are to be attributed to fanatical motives. In this respect I continue to receive satisfactory accounts from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, as well as from private sources in other parts of the interior.

A proof of the confidence felt by the Christian population is afforded in the crowds of Bulgarian reapers, who, as usual at this time of the year, are making their way from the districts on both sides of the Balkans to those towards Constantinople, leaving their families behind them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 449.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, June 11, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Excellency herewith copies of two despatches which Mr. Vice-Consul Dupuis has addressed to me under date of the 7th and 8th instant, reporting various recent cases of robbery and cattle-lifting.

I have brought the cases in question to the notice of the Vali, and, by his Excellency's admission, as well as from the accounts I receive from independent sources, I fear there can be no doubt that the country is becoming more insecure.

With reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 27th ultimo, I beg further to inclose the copy of a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Willshire, of Dédéagatch, respecting the band of Greek brigands who recently landed on the coast in that neighbourhood. The Vali informs me that twelve of these brigands have been captured, and that they prove to be native Greeks from Enos and other places on the coast. Seven or eight of the band are still at large.

As regards the unfortunate soldier who was thrown over a cliff by these outlaws, the Vali informs me that, although severely injured, it is hoped he will recover. Nothing further is known regarding the fate of the other captives, Thoma and the two zaptiehs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 2 in No. 449.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Adrianople, June 7, 1877.*

ON the 17th ultimo two native Greeks, Apostol Sideroglu and Pasqual Giovan, complained to me that they had been attacked and robbed of 5,000 piastres in cash by three armed Circassians while they were travelling in company with a zabtieh, Hussein Kerneli, as guard, to Rodosto, on the 13th ultimo; and requested the intervention of this Office with the local authorities with the view of obtaining the restitution of their property.

I sent my dragoman to represent the case to the Governor-General, and his Excellency at once telegraphed orders to the Mutesarif of Rodosto to make inquiries in the matter, and to arrest the zabtieh who was in company with the Greeks; but as nothing seems to have come of the affair, and Sideroglu is constantly calling at the office, I again mentioned the subject to the Mutesbar on Monday in the absence of the Vali. The Mutesbar was quite ignorant of the occurrence, but promised to make inquiries if I would send the Greeks before him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 449.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Adrianople, June 8, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that I have to-day brought to the knowledge of the Turkish authorities that, about the beginning of this month, four Christians of Kavakli, in the Caza of Kirk-Kalissé, were waylaid and attacked by armed Circassians, who robbed them of 4,000 piastres in cash.

Also, that two zabtiehs, guards stationed at the railway bridge over the Maritza at Kuleli-Bourgas, had robbed a poor Greek travelling hawker of Ganos of all his wares, money, and a mule, and also brutally beat him.

His Excellency desired me to leave with him a Memorandum of these outrages, and assured me that every inquiry should be made, and the zabtiehs severely punished.

I took the opportunity of calling the attention of the Governor-General to the numerous cases of cattle-lifting by Circassians, and I left with him a list of the cases of cattle stolen within the last few days from the different villages in the neighbourhood of Baba-Eski.

The Governor-General, while promising to cause investigations to be made, said it was very difficult to trace lost cattle, especially horses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 4 in No. 449.

Vice-Consul Willshire to Consul Blunt.

Dédéagatch, June 5, 1877.

Sir,

ON the 25th ultimo I had the honour to inform you that a small Greek vessel had landed, not far from Maeri, a band of brigands, who the next day entered the village of Marounia, and seizing on one of the principal inhabitants of that place named Thoma, carried him off to the mountains, and refused to grant him his liberty unless he paid them a ransom of 2,000*l.* Turkish. They also seized and carried off two zaptiehs.

I regret to state that no news has been obtained of the unfortunate man Thoma or of the two zaptiehs, nor have the Turkish authorities been able to get any clue as to where the brigands have directed their steps, although they have done all in their power to that end. Fifty-five zaptiehs came by rail from Adrianople besides those sent from Gumurdjino, and I am assured that altogether more than 300 armed men have been sent to track them out and arrest them. The Vali of Adrianople has sent here the Dragoman of the vilayet, Tasso Effendi, to see that his Excellency's orders are properly carried out. The Turkish aviso "Mossul," sent here by the Government to watch the coast, called here the day before yesterday.

I am informed that the famous brigand chief, Petko, the terror of these parts for so many years, has joined the band.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LEONARD W. WILLSHIRE.

No. 450.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 20. Political.)

My Lord,

Adrianople, June 11, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith the translations of two encyclical letters which have been addressed by the Greek Patriarch and Synod to the Greek clergy and nation in reference to the present war.

These circulars have been publicly read by order of the Greek Archbishop in the cathedral and churches of Adrianople, as well as in all the towns and villages included in the Archiepiscopal Diocese.

I also inclose the copy and translation of a Greek prayer for the success of the Sultan's arms. It has been prepared by the Greek Patriarch, and forwarded by his Holiness to the Archbishops, with instructions that it be publicly read in all the Greek churches on Sundays and holidays.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 450.

Encyclical Letter of the Greek Patriarch relative to the War.

(Traduction.)

JOACHIM, par la grâce de Dieu, Archevêque de Constantinople, la nouvelle Rôme, et Patriarche Œcuménique.

Cher frère en Saint-Esprit et co-officiant de notre médiocrité, M. ——; très-honorés ecclésiastiques, très-pieux prêtres, honorables démogérontes et primats, et vous tous Chrétiens bénis de cette province, nos chers enfants en Dieu. Que la grâce de Dieu et la paix soient avec vous.

Ce qui doit distinguer tout Chrétien pieux et orthodoxe c'est évidemment après la crainte de Dieu le respect des institutions et des pouvoirs établis. Il doit vivre en bonne intelligence et en concorde fraternelle avec les autres peuples qui habitent le même pays. Le Seigneur, notre Sauveur, a expressément dit que l'on doit rendre à César ce qui est à César, et à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu; Saint Pierre, son apôtre, a également recommandé, "à toute créature humaine de se soumettre, pour plaire au Seigneur, aux Rois, et aux Princes," de craindre Dieu et d'honorer son Roi. En outre, l'esprit et l'histoire de notre sainte religion font foi de ces mêmes principes.

En réglant donc notre conduite d'après ces saintes prescriptions, nous nous rendons dignes du nom de Chrétiens, et tout en accomplissant le divin précepte, nous faisons en même temps notre devoir envers la royauté qui est établi sur nous par la volonté divine, et sous la protection de laquelle notre nation a vécu tant de siècles, en conservant sa religion, sa langue et ses traditions. Notre nation, une des plus importantes entre celles qui composent ce grand Empire, contribuant par le travail et l'activité de ses enfants à son progrès et sa grandeur, se réjouit naturellement de la prospérité de l'Etat, elle s'affligе et souffre de tous les embarras qui l'obsèdent et prend une grande part dans toutes ses vicissitudes. Elle a toujours et en toute circonstance fait preuve de ces mêmes sentiments, et aujourd'hui elle suit avec la plus grande affliction et un vif intérêt patriotique les efforts fait par le Gouvernement de la patrie commune.

Les difficultés au milieu desquelles il se débat actuellement mettent une entrave au développement du progrès et empêchent l'exécution des intentions nobles et généreuses de notre très-puissant et très-aimé Empereur, le Sultan Abd-ul-Hamid Khan II, notre maître, qui a brillamment inauguré son glorieux règne en accordant des institutions libérales, et qui consacrent l'égalité complète devant la justice et devant l'état de tous ses peuples, sans distinction de race et de religion.

Par conséquent, nous, qui par la grâce de Dieu et la clémence du Souverain, sommes chargés de l'édification des fidèles Orthodoxes, prenant en considération les circonstances actuelles qui sont à tous les points de vue très-difficiles, et nous intéressant à ce que tous les Orthodoxes suivent une ligne de conduite agréable à Dieu, nous nous sommes décidés à adresser la présente lettre pastorale à votre Grandeur et à tous les Chrétiens bénis de cette province. Nous conseillons tout particulièrement à votre Grandeur et au clergé qui relève de votre juridiction, en considération des grands soins que le Gouvernement de notre auguste Empereur prend aujourd'hui plus que jamais pour protéger les intérêts et la tranquillité du peuple soumis à son pouvoir, d'exhorter sans cesse vos ouailles à se maintenir strictement dans la voie du devoir et de la soumission.

Nous conseillons également aux primats d'user de toute leur influence dans ce but, et recommandons à tous de soulager le Gouvernement en le soutenant par la sympathie publique et les sentiments de reconnaissance, en lui accordant moralement et matériellement toute l'assistance et le concours possibles, en respectant ses lois, et en lui fournissant des preuves matérielles d'intérêt. Nous vous recommandons aussi de vivre en bonne intelligence et en concorde fraternelle avec les autres peuples soumis au même pouvoir, de vaquer tranquillement à vos occupations, et d'adresser à Dieu des prières afin qu'il accorde une longue période d'années de santé et de bonheur à Sa Majesté Impériale notre très-aimé Souverain, qu'il lui fasse remporter par son armée Impériale des victoires et des trophées contre ses ennemis, et qu'il dégage son Gouvernement et tout l'Empire des difficultés et des embarras actuels.

Le 25 Avril, 1877.

Inclosure 2 in No. 450.

Pastoral Letter of the Greek Patriarch relative to the War.

(Traduction.)

NOTRE pieuse communauté Orthodoxe connait très-bien les graves événements qui troublent depuis quelque temps notre Gouvernement et tout l'Empire en général, événements qui ont malheureusement rendu inévitable une guerre terrible que l'Eglise a vu éclater avec un indescriptible serrement de cœur et une douleur profonde.

L'Eglise, prenant en considération la gravité des difficultés politiques que soutient notre Gouvernement, et pour remplir un devoir sacré envers notre auguste Souverain, s'est empressée de vous adresser dernièrement les exhortations de sa prévoyance ecclésiastique, afin que, vous conformant aux ordres précis de notre Sainte-Ecriture et à l'esprit de notre religion, vous donniez les premiers l'exemple d'une soumission absolue au Trône Impérial et d'un accord fraternel avec les autres peuples de l'Empire; afin que, comme vous l'avez toujours fait dans d'autres temps, vous fassiez encore aujourd'hui, dans les circonstances extraordinaires où nous sommes, preuve de dévoûment envers notre Gouvernement, non-seulement par des paroles, mais encore par des actes; non-seulement moralement, mais matériellement en l'aidant de tout votre pouvoir à sortir des difficultés qui l'entourent.

L'Eglise, revenant aujourd'hui sur la chose pour vous la recommander d'une manière plus particulière et exiger de vous que vous vous conformiez avec la plus

grande exactitude à l'esprit de ses exhortations, comme vous l'ordonne non-seulement votre devoir envers notre auguste Souverain, mais encore votre intérêt bien entendu, l'Eglise vous rappelle ce qu'aucun de vous n'ignore que cette lutte terrible, que notre Gouvernement n'a accepté qu'avec peine et contre son gré, il la soutient pour repousser une attaque étrangère qui menace l'honneur et l'indépendance de l'Empire.

Sans doute, et personne ne le nie, notre pays avait et a besoin de réformes et d'améliorations, afin de pouvoir développer ses immenses ressources et faire progresser le bonheur de ses peuples; mais les défectuosités de son organisation politique, défectuosités qui, de temps à autre, créaient des sérieux embarras à l'Empire, étaient depuis longtemps connues de notre Gouvernement, qui n'a jamais manqué de faire preuve de bonne volonté, et a toujours marché d'un pas ferme et confiant, au milieu des difficultés sans nombre à leur réformation, et particulièrement le Prince qui tient les rênes de l'Etat dès son avènement au Trône glorieux de ses ancêtres, s'est empressé de reconnaître franchement et spontanément le mal et de porter courageusement remède.

Une preuve éclatante des nobles et paternelles intentions de notre auguste Souverain est, sans contredit, l'octroi, émanant de sa généreuse initiative, d'une Charte Constitutionnelle qui consacre, sans distinction de race ni de religion, la pleine égalité civile et politique des peuples réunis sous son sceptre, et qui sera certainement suivie de la promulgation des lois destinées à compléter la législation de l'Empire.

Nous attendons de la réalisation des paternelles intentions de notre très-puissant Souverain la régénération de l'Empire et son rétablissement au rang élevé qui lui appartient, et aussi le progrès de toutes les classes de ses sujets, sans exception. Mais vous savez tous que le passage d'un système politique à un autre, ayant à lutter contre des difficultés de toutes sortes, n'est pas une chose aisée, et l'histoire d'aucun peuple ne nous offre pas d'exemples qu'une pareille œuvre ne soit accomplie en un jour. Chez nous, toutefois, un grand pas a été fait vers sa réalisation, parce que les causes de notre malaise ayant été clairement aperçues et franchement reconnues, on a pris la généreuse et ferme résolution de les faire disparaître: notre puissant et paternel Souverain et son Gouvernement éclairé s'avancent résolûment vers le grand œuvre de la régénération de l'Empire, malgré les obstacles innombrables qu'ils rencontrent sur leur chemin.

Ces généreuses prémices sont un gage précieux pour les peuples de l'Empire, qui, laissant à un avenir prochain le soin d'achever l'œuvre commencée, peuvent dès aujourd'hui regarder comme assurés leurs progrès et leur prospérité. Toutes les Grandes Puissances de l'Europe qui s'intéressent sincèrement au sort des Chrétiens de l'Orient reconnaissent et apprécient à leur valeur les bonnes intentions de notre puissant Souverain et de son Gouvernement, et, naturellement, désirent lui laisser le temps nécessaire pour les réaliser; mais l'une d'elles, malheureusement, poussée nous ne savons par quel motif, mais à coup sûr par un motif tout autre que celui de l'intérêt des Chrétiens, a profité des difficultés intérieures de l'Empire pour lui déclarer une guerre injuste, sous le prétexte de prendre la défense de tous les Chrétiens d'Orient sans exception, mais en réalité dans le dessein de poursuivre des avantages particuliers et exclusifs, ce que prouvent jusqu'à l'évidence ses derniers agissements, qui sont notoires.

Notre pays est devenu le théâtre de la guerre et la proie de tous les maux qui l'accompagnent. Vous sentez tous que le Gouvernement Impérial a le droit et le devoir de repousser de tout son pouvoir l'invasion injustifiable de notre territoire.

L'Europe elle-même est pleinement en droit de penser que la Puissance qui nous attaque a été poussée à la guerre actuelle bien plutôt par des motifs d'intérêts particuliers que par le désir désintéressé d'améliorer le sort des Chrétiens, dont le véritable intérêt est dans le développement pacifique et régulier des institutions libérales dont la paternelle initiative de notre Souverain a doté le pays, et qui lui assurent le progrès et la prospérité. Ayant jugé à propos de vous rappeler toutes ces choses, d'abord, nous adressons de nouveau au Dieu de paix et de miséricorde nos vœux et nos prières pour que de sa main puissante il éloigne de notre chère patrie cette guerre injuste et funeste et y mette fin; et, en second lieu, nous vous recommandons encore de donner sans cesse à notre auguste Souverain des preuves sincères et éclatantes de votre fidélité et de votre dévoûment, et de soutenir de toutes vos forces notre Gouvernement dans la grande lutte où il se trouve engagé pour l'honneur et l'indépendance de notre patrie commune.

Inclosure 3 in No. 450.

Greek Prayer for the Success of the Sultan's Arms.

(Traduction.)

CETTE prière doit être lue par le prêtre tous les Dimanches et les jours de fête; les assistants diront "Amen":—

"Seigneur notre Dieu, le Roi des Rois, et le Maître des Puissants, par ta Providence indicible et ton extrême bonté désirant dans tes volontés impénétrables le salut des hommes, Tu établis sur la terre des autorités et des pouvoirs, tes serviteurs, pour faire le bien, et Tu envoyas des Rois et des Princes pour punir les méchants et récompenser les bons.

"C'est pourquoi ton Fils unique, notre Seigneur Jésus Christ, qui se fit homme pour le salut du monde et enseigner aux hommes l'amour de Dieu et du prochain, nous commanda en même temps que l'obéissance au Roi des Cieux la soumission aux Rois de la terre, disant: 'Rendez à César ce qui est à César et à Dieu ce qui est à Dieu,' et par la bouche de ses saints apôtres nous enjoignit également de nous soumettre aux pouvoirs établis, et de faire des prières pour les Rois et tous ceux qui exercent une autorité.

"Obéissant donc à la divine parole, nous prions à l'heure présente pour notre très-respectable Empereur le Sultan Abd-ul Hamid Khan, notre Maître.

"Accorde-lui une santé parfaite et une vie longue. Rends son règne puissant et fortifie son armée en lui faisant obtenir des victoires contre ses ennemis. Parle dans son cœur du bien en faveur de tous les peuples confiés à sa sollicitude paternelle et éclaire ces derniers afin qu'ils vivent en paix et concorde fraternelle les uns avec les autres restants fidèles et dévoués à la royauté qui est établie sur eux par la volonté Divine.

"Nous Te prions aussi pour la paix de tout le monde, car c'est Toi qui est le Maître de la paix et le dispensateur de tous les biens.

"Gloire à Toi, le Père, le Fils, et le Saint Esprit à présent et toujours, et aux siècles des siècles. Amen."

No. 451.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 43. Political.)

My Lord, *Salonica, June 14, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith (Inclosure No. 1), for your Lordship's information, a copy of a despatch which I addressed yesterday to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte on the subjects of the appointment of another Governor-General to replace Dervish Pasha, the new levies of troops, the increase of taxation, and the probable effect the proposed levying of the tithes by the officers of the Government will have on the population and the Treasury itself.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure in No. 451.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency that 1,200 "Mustaphiz," or reserve militia, have arrived here from different parts of the vilayet, and have been lodged at the barracks. There are 700 already there.

These last arrived have arms, but no uniforms.

The authorities here have heard to-day by telegram from Constantinople that Nusred Pasha has been appointed to succeed our Vali, Dervish Pasha, who left this for the capital on Saturday, the 9th instant, as I telegraphed to your Excellency, and reported in my despatch of the 10th instant in cypher.

I hear from Mr. Vice-Consul Sutor, at Larissa, that distress prevails generally in his district, caused by the pressure put upon the people by the levying of extra imposts and contributions, and by the reports prevalent of double the amount of

titles—"Verghi," "Askar-Bedalieh," and sheep-tax—being about to be made on them. Among other contributions, one of two kilogrammes of wheat to be levied upon each pair of ploughing cattle, towards defraying the cost of making clothes for the "Mustaphiz" levies, which is now being prepared in Thessaly from native manufactures.

A similar appeal to patriotism has been made there as was attempted here, with this difference, that a list of the supposed ability to pay both by Mahommedans and Christians was made out, and the sums noted opposite their names.

The same impression prevails here, viz., that a double tithe will be exacted this coming harvest, that is, a fifth, instead of a tenth (the sheep-tax has already been doubled here), and that Government will levy the tithe through their officers, and not by sale of the tithe to "farmers." This will in all probability produce a much smaller sum, if we are to judge by previous cases in this vilayet and in others; but, on the other hand, it will produce a corresponding relief to the populations, who will be enabled to compound with the Porte's officers and pay only just what they will be able to bargain for and bribe them to accept; and the Government, calculating on this contingency, will reckon on receiving about as much as if the sum had been paid at a tenth of the produce, as in former years.

Of course in some cases the rich and well-to-do will pay less, and the poor will pay more; but this is inevitable in Turkey, for which no remedy has as yet been found.

Two American men-of-war have been here for three days, and have left (yesterday). We have a French small man-of-war on this station, but no British since the "Pallas," Captain Beamish, left us for Smyrna on the 6th instant.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

No. 452.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 614. Confidential.)
Therapia, June 15, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Porte has been informed that the Panslavist Committee of St. Petersburgh has recently established a branch at Venice under the direction of M. Aksakow and M. Uxkull, the Russian Minister at Rome, who are making purchases of arms and munitions of war, and sending them to the Slav populations of the neighbouring countries. A few days ago six mountain guns and 125 cases containing rifles and ammunition are said to have been embarked in a vessel under the Greek flag, and were forwarded, it is supposed, to Montenegro. The Venice branch has since made considerable purchases of arms, and has, it is alleged, at present in store twelve guns, and about 300 cases of rifles. As they may be destined for Austrian Croatia or any other Austrian Slav province, as well as for Bosnia or Montenegro, Austria has, it is stated, made some representations on the subject through her Legation at Rome to the Italian Government. Signor Melegari replied "that he knew nothing of the matter, but, as the trade in arms and munitions of war was free in Italy, he could not interfere with it, even if the statements regarding the proceedings of the Panslavist Committee at Venice were true." I am further informed that the Turkish Minister at Rome had also spoken on this subject to the Italian Government, and had received the same answer.

It is further stated that Austria, after receiving this reply, had sent 40,000 rifles to the Tyrol to arm the Tyrolese *arrière-ban*.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 453.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 616.)
Therapia, June 14, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. SANDISON, by my direction, made very strong representations to Safvet Pasha with respect to the murder of a Christian, who is alleged to have been burnt to death with petroleum by some Turks near Monastir, and to other outrages referred to in Mr. Acting Consul Barker's despatch to me, of the 28th ultimo, copy of which was sent by him to your Lordship. I urged upon his Excellency that the authors of such monstrous crimes should be punished with death. His Excellency promised to give every attention to the matter.

I have not thought it necessary to inform your Lordship of the steps that I have taken with regard to the numerous despatches I receive from British Consular Agents relating to robberies and excesses committed by Circassians and other marauders in different parts of the country. I have invariably had memoranda made of them, which have been placed in the hands of Safvet Pasha, with an earnest request, on my part, that the cases described should be inquired into, those guilty of them captured and punished, and measures taken, without delay, for the better security of life and property.

I am bound to say that his Excellency has met my representations with expressions of sincere regret that such cases should have occurred, and has assured me of the earnest desire of the Porte to put an end to a state of things which has been caused by the war, and the imperative necessity of sending to the front all the troops and police that could be disposed of.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 454.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 188.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 22, 1877, 7 P.M.*

AUSTRIAN Government has replied to representations of the Porte with regard to alleged movement in Servia that, although there is a political party in the Principality that may wish to embroil Servia again in war with Turkey, the Turkish Government should remain quiet and indifferent to it, as the assurances received as to the attitude of Servia are satisfactory.

No. 455.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 22, 1877, 7:30 P.M.*

I HAVE now obtained copy of the note of the Austrian Ambassador referred to in my telegram No. 177 of the 18th instant. It is very nearly the same in substance as Count Andrassy's despatch to Count Zichy inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 177, with the exception that some of the expressions in the Note are perhaps stronger, especially one referring to Turkish "system of declaring and considering Danube simply as a line of defence of the Ottoman Empire," which Austria says she cannot admit. Although I have seen Count Zichy several times, and have spoken to him about the navigation of the Danube, he has carefully avoided any allusion to this Note.

No. 456.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 23, 1877, 12:10 A.M.*

WILL you let me know as soon as possible whether Sultan's Envoy to Afghanistan may pass through India, as Porte has made all the arrangements for his departure on Wednesday next?

No. 457.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 191.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 23, 1877, 10·30 A.M.*

MR. THOMSON requests me to forward following to your Lordship:—

"Mr. Abbott considers that Persian Koords, who have recently crossed the frontier, ostensibly to aid the Turks, only seek indiscriminate plunder, and that if Koordish irregulars are allowed to enter the Tyaree its Christian population will be in great danger.

"In a subsequent telegram he states that a convent and several Christian villages in Turkish territory have been pillaged by Persian Koords of the Shakakee tribe."

No. 458.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 23, 1877, 2·25 P.M.*

WITH reference to your despatch No. 612 of the 13th instant, Her Majesty's Government did not intend to instruct you to propose to the Porte or to support the peace conditions mentioned in my telegram.

They merely wished to inform you confidentially of them, and to receive your observations.

No. 459.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 23, 1877, 3·20 P.M.*

IN reply to your telegram of the 22nd instant, as the Turkish Mission to Afghanistan has been sanctioned by you, after communication with the Viceroy, Her Majesty's Government are now unwilling to stop it.

The Indian Government will, however, be directed not in any way to identify itself with the Mission, but simply to forward it with ordinary civilities.

Her Majesty's Government think that for the future it will be desirable, in order to avoid confusion, that communications between the Embassy and the Viceroy should, as a rule, pass through London.

No. 460.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Vienna, June 23, 1877, 3 P.M.*

THE Austrian Ambassador at Constantinople is to state, in answer to the inquiry of the Porte as to the probable passage of Russian troops through Servia, that the Austrian Government continue to believe that such a measure is not intended, but that they cannot pretend to answer for the intentions of Roumania and Servia, though they believe Russia has advised both, and especially the latter Principality, not to take part in the war. They decline, therefore, giving any advice on the subject.

The Servian Agent here explained yesterday at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs that Prince Milan had visited the Emperor of Russia, not with a view to declaring war, but to demonstrate to his own subjects that in maintaining peace he was acting by the advice of His Imperial Majesty.

No. 461.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, June 23, 1877.*

THE official telegrams to-day represent Turks advancing from Nichsich and Montenegrins holding opposite heights at Ostrog, while skirmishes between them are generally favourable to latter. The other Turkish corps are said to be unable to advance to effect a junction with that at Ostrog.

No. 462.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 231.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 23, 1877.*

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith a Circular which has been addressed to the British Consuls and Vice-Consuls in Turkey, explaining the nature of the outrages which it is desired that they should investigate and report.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

Inclosure in No. 462.

Circular addressed to Her Majesty's Consuls in Turkey.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 20, 1877.*

WITH reference to the Earl of Derby's Circular despatch of March 27, I am directed by his Lordship to state to you that the instruction authorizing you to investigate and report cases of outrage occurring in your district is not intended to apply to ordinary crimes and police offences, and that you should act upon it only when you have reason to believe that serious and deliberate outrages against Christians have been attempted or committed by or with the connivance of the Turkish authorities, or by the Mussulman population.

I am, &c.
(Signed) TENTERDEN.

No. 463.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 233. Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 23, 1877.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 612, Most Confidential, of the 13th instant, referring to the terms of peace which his Excellency Count Schouvaloff has stated that Russia would be ready to accept if peace is concluded before her armies cross the Balkans, and which I communicated to you by telegraph on the 12th instant; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government had no intention of instructing you either to propose these conditions of peace to the Porte or to support them. They were communicated to you for your confidential information only, and in order that you might report your observations on them to Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 464.

Vice-Consul Brown to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Braila, June 23, 1877, 7 P.M.*

RUSSIANS have taken Matchin, abandoned by Turks without further fighting. Czar returned to Ploesti after review. Russian troops from here crossing in steamboats and by bridge.

No. 465.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 192.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 23, 1877, 7·15 P.M.*

FOLLOWING information received from the Porte :—

"Russians crossed Danube in boats with heavy loss last night at two points in the Dobrudja, namely, between Matchin and Isaktcha, and again between Hirsova and Kara Agatch. Turkish forces retired after proper resistance. Number of Russian troops that crossed unknown.

"Bayazid is occupied by 12,000 Kurds. Russian garrison retired to a strong building out of the town, which is about to be attacked by Turkish regulars now marching upon it. Mouktar Pasha announces two great battles fought on the 21st and 22nd instant. Result most favourable to Turkish arms. Names of places where the fighting took place not mentioned. Junction effected by the Turkish corps d'armée in Montenegro."

No. 466.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, June 23, 1877.*

SENT Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople following :—

"Prince Milan returns to-night. With regard to intention attributed to Russian troops to cross Danube into Servia this is unlikely, as no movement of Russian troops reported from Little Wallachia. Those stationed there hitherto are Roumanian, and if these intended assuming offensive something ought to be known of it at Bucharest. I am without information on the subject."

No. 467.

Vice-Consul Brown to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.) *Braila, June 23, 1877.*

RUSSIAN force, 4,000, crossed yesterday in boats from Galatz; attacked and captured two batteries on spur of Balkans; now attacking Matchin; eighty wounded returned to Galatz. Bridge, Ibraila, ready. Czar just arrived. Crossing in force hourly.

No. 468.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 23.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June 23, 1877.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY reports that twelve companies of Russians crossed yesterday at Ibraila without opposition. At 2 this morning they attacked Turks in entrenchments and drove them in. Considerable loss on both sides. Fighting continued till 5 A.M.

Russian outposts eight miles north of Matchin.

No. 469.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 117.)
My Lord, *Athens, June 16, 1877.*

M. LEONIDAS BULGARIS, who was last mentioned in my despatch No. 102 of the 2nd instant, as being in hiding, in consequence of an order having been issued by the judicial authorities at Lamia for his arrest, in connection with a projected expedition against Turkey, is said to have shown his confidence in the new Government, by placing 100 rifles at their disposal, and by promising a further donation of 1,200 of the same pattern.

There could scarcely be a more convincing proof than the above of M. Leonidas Bulgaris' complicity in plots such as that for which he ought to have been arrested, but if he has given up all the arms in his possession, it may perhaps not be thought worth while to proceed with his prosecution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. STUART.

No. 470.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June 23, 1877.*

THIS morning at 10 o'clock I telegraphed to your Lordship that the junction between the forces of Suleiman and Ali Saib Pashas had been effected in neighbourhood of Martiniei, Suleiman Pasha having gained the road by the village of Slatina. Now, at half-past 8 in the evening, I am informed that, by the orders of the Porte, I can only telegraph to your Lordship *en clair*.

(Sent to Constantinople.)

No. 471.

Consul-General White to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 24.)

(Telegraphic.) *Belgrade, June 24, 1877, 6 A.M.*

THE Prince of Servia returned from his visit to Roumania late last night.

No. 472.

Consul Moore to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 11. Political.)
My Lord, *Jerusalem, June 9, 1877.*

I have the honour to transmit, for your Lordship's information, a copy of my despatch of this date to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople on the state of the country.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

Inclosure in No. 472.

Consul Moore to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Jerusalem, June 9, 1877.*

I HAD the honour to telegraph to your Excellency on the 29th ultimo as follows :—

"Battalion of regulars received orders to leave forthwith, disorders increasing, security seriously endangered if battalion goes."

The fresh disorders alluded to in the above were further acts of brigandage and violence committed by Bedouins in the Jaffa Plain. In one case the troops fired upon the latter as they were carrying off crops near Gaza, and killed five of them.

As, notwithstanding the promise of the Porte to leave the battalion at Jerusalem, as intimated in your Excellency's telegram of the 30th of May, it has ordered by telegraph that these troops should be dispatched to Constantinople, I addressed to you the following telegram, dated the 8th instant:—

"Porte has renewed order for battalion of regulars to leave."

Last night another telegram was received by the local authorities, ordering that the redifs, who were to go with the battalion, should remain, and the latter be dispatched at once, and accordingly it is preparing to leave.

I have, &c.
(Signed) NOEL TEMPLE MOORE.

No. 473.

Sir J. Drummond-Hay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 43.)
My Lord, *Tangier, June 13, 1877.*

WITH reference to my despatches No. 37 of the 17th ultimo and No. 39 of the 31st ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I have received a further telegram from Mr. Layard, dated the 9th instant, informing me that the Turkish emissary Senoosy was the bearer of a letter from the Sultan of Turkey to Sultan Mulai Hassan, and that Senoosy had telegraphed, since his arrival in this country, that he had been received with great honour by the Sultan, and that His Majesty had sent 100 horsemen to meet him, and that he is confident of the success of his mission.

I communicated the subject of this telegram to Cid Mohammed Bargash, who remarked that when Senoosy sent this telegram, he could not have reached the Moorish Court, for when he arrived at Fez the Sultan had moved to Mequinez, and that the Moorish Government had not, up to the present time, taken the slightest notice of Senoosy.

I informed Mr. Layard that since the receipt of his telegram of the 6th instant, which I had communicated to Cid Mohammed Bargash, he had written to the Court to suggest that the letter from the Sultan of Turkey should be received, even if His Majesty declined to admit Senoosy to an audience, and that His Majesty's reply, couched in friendly language, should be sent through Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to the Sultan.

Yesterday M. Romea informed me that he had received a telegram from his Government, inquiring as to the truth of a fanatical movement against Europeans having taken place in the interior, in consequence of the war between Turkey and Russia, and requested me to inform him whether I had heard similar rumours, and whether a Turkish emissary had been sent by the Sultan of Turkey to this Government. I informed M. Romea that I did not think there was any foundation for the information received by the Spanish Government; that the Sultan of Morocco had decided upon observing a strict neutrality during the present war; and that, up to the present time, the Moorish Government had declined to receive the Turkish emissary, who, I informed him, was a Moorish subject.

M. Romea observed that if Senoosy attempted to rouse the fanatical feelings of the Moorish population during his journey through this country, he should ask his colleagues to join with him in urging this Government to prevent proceedings which might give rise to grave disorders. I informed M. Romea that I had already advised Cid Mohammed Bargash to keep an eye upon Senoosy's movements.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 474.

Sir J. Drummond-Hay to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 45. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Tangier, June 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I received a telegram from Mr. Layard, dated the 15th instant, requesting me to take steps to induce the Sultan

of Morocco to receive the letter from the Sultan of Turkey, and stating that the latter would be disposed to send at some future time a proper envoy.

I replied in a telegram this morning that I had already advised the Sultan to receive and to reply to the Royal letter.

I further informed Mr. Layard that the Emissary Senoosy had received the Turkish Government when he stated by telegram that he had been favourably received at the Moorish Court, and that a large body of troops had been sent to meet him.

Senoosy had not even arrived at the Moorish Court when he sent that telegram.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. H. DRUMMOND-HAY.

No. 475.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 329. Most Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 20, 1877.*

I HAVE read with very great interest, and not without some surprise, the Memorandum of a confidential conversation with your Lordship by Count Schouvaloff, recording the substance of his instructions on the possible terms of peace between Russia and Turkey.

In that document is shadowed forth for the first time the possibility of the Russian forces being constrained to advance to Constantinople, although with assurances that under no circumstances would the Russians remain there.

But in a conversation on another occasion, which is recorded in your Lordship's despatch No. 225 of June 11, Count Schouvaloff admitted that he had no expectation that the conditions of peace to which he referred would be accepted by the Porte until the Turkish Government had learned by a painful experience (probably the occupation of the capital) how inadequate their means of resistance were; stating also that "the object of his Government was not so much that Her Majesty's Government should use their endeavours to press the conditions of peace upon Turkey, but rather to ensure the neutrality of England."

Count Schouvaloff refers to the essential object of the war, which he defines for Russia as consisting in the complete subjugation of Turkey, on the one hand, and in protecting the Christians, especially those in Bulgaria, against the abuses of Turkish administration, on the other.

But, in the conditions of peace submitted by Count Schouvaloff, it is stated that, should the Porte sue for peace before the Russians cross the Balkans, Russia reserved to herself the right of stipulating for certain other advantages for herself as compensation for the expenses of the war.

In the face of the most positive assurances given by the Emperor that he sought no aggrandizement or extension of territory, the restoration of the ceded portion of Bessarabia and the cession of Batoum are mentioned as compensation to be claimed by Russia.

Roumania is also to be rewarded for her services to Russia by the acquisition of the Dobrudscha, and an indefinite compensation is suggested for Austria-Hungary in Bosnia and the Herzegovina.

Anything more vague, more insidious, or in greater contradiction to the object of the war and the assurances of the Emperor, cannot be imagined, nor is their real object concealed with the usual skill of Russian diplomacy, for it is avowed "qu'il importe à l'Empereur de savoir si dans ces limites indiqués il peut être assuré de la neutralité de l'Angleterre, neutralité qui exclurait une occupation même temporaire de Constantinople et des Détroits par cette Puissance."

The object of Prince Gortchakow has been for some time directed to a complete obliteration of the Treaty of Paris, and to wipe out the humiliation under which Russia was placed.

Nothing could more effectually carry out this object than the proposals which Count Schouvaloff has submitted to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 476.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 330. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 20, 1877.*

SINCE the departure of the Emperor and Prince Gortchakow for the seat of war there is a complete stagnation here in regard to any political or diplomatic action.

Little is known as to events passing on the Danube or of the military operations in Asia, except the meagre intelligence conveyed to the public by the official telegrams from the Commander-in-chief.

The passage of the Danube has been delayed in consequence of the late floods, and it is reported that it cannot take place earlier than the 25th instant.

The opinion entertained here of the hope and intention of signing a peace at Constantinople is daily gaining ground and is openly discussed by the Russian press.

The temporary occupation of that capital is represented as the deserved fruits of a victorious campaign and as a necessary evidence to the Mussulman population of Turkish defeat.

Nor will it have escaped your Lordship's observation that in the late communication from the Imperial Government not only is there no assurance given that the Russian forces will not advance to Constantinople, but evidence is not wanting to prove that such is their ultimate intention.

The chief object of the Russian explanations, as lately communicated to your Lordship by Count Schouvaloff, appears to me to be solely directed to calm and pacify the fears of England and to occupy public attention with pacific assurances until it should be too late for any preventive military action on the part of Great Britain.

It is my firm belief that if England maintains a passive attitude until the Russian armies pass the Balkan, and that Russia is thereby secured from a previous occupation of Constantinople by an English force, the diplomatic language of Russia will assume a very different tone, and the conditions of peace will be of a far more onerous nature.

I am disposed to believe that the Russian Government are not unprepared for a possible occupation of Constantinople by England, not for Turkish but for British interests, and that such a measure, if represented as bearing no act of hostility to Russia, will not be considered as a *casus belli*, although it will naturally produce a feeling of bitter disappointment.

The question is whether England or Russia shall first occupy Constantinople?

If we do not occupy Constantinople and the Dardanelles they will be inevitably occupied by the Russians, and who can foresee what may be the duration or consequences of such an occupation.

Take, for instance, the position of the Dardanelles. I am told that it could be rendered impregnable at a very small expense, and form a second Gibraltar. Should it fall into Russian hands, can any assurance by Russia be relied on that she will not retain it permanently? It is yet time to prevent the possibility of Russia acquiring this important position. Her armies under the most favourable circumstances could, after crossing the Danube, scarcely reach the Dardanelles or Constantinople under two or probably three months, nor could they, in view of military exigencies for the maintenance of their communications and for masking the Turkish fortresses, do so with any considerable force.

I rather believe that the knowledge by Russia of an occupation of Constantinople and the Dardanelles by England would lead them at once to abandon any intention of proceeding further than Adrianople, and that negotiations for peace would then be opened.

The position of England under such circumstances would be most favourable, and we could more readily come to an understanding with Russia as to the future of Turkey than if we had abstained from all military action.

I venture to submit these views to your Lordship, and crave your indulgence for doing so. The gravity of the moment, and the serious importance of the British interests at stake, must plead my excuse.

I have, &c.
(Signed) AUGUSTUS LOFTUS.

No. 477.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 263.)
My Lord, *Berlin, June 23, 1877.*

A REPORT has lately been current in the newspapers of Berlin that Mr. Layard's relations with the Turkish Government were no longer as friendly as Her Majesty's Government might desire, and that this change was due to the influence acquired by Prince Reuss over the Turkish Ministers.

To this report the German Government have given a formal denial in the semi-official organs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 478.

Mr. Macdonell to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 269. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Berlin, June 23, 1877.*

THE dilatoriness of the Russian military movements on the Danube appears to be slowly but gradually working a change in the current of public opinion in Germany.

Whilst in April last Lord Odo Russell reported to your Lordship that, "to judge from the general exultation in Berlin, from the Emperor to the youngest cadet, the war was really popular," a feeling akin to disappointment is now manifesting itself at the slow progress of the operation, if not at the inability of the Russian Commanders, this feeling being perhaps more apparent in military circles than with the general public.

The idea, moreover, is gaining ground that, owing to their want of foresight, the Russian authorities have exposed the army to a perhaps greater enemy by allowing it to linger unoccupied on the banks of the Danube, where sickness and privations may be the cause of some serious check, the moral effect of which would be equal to a defeat.

It is feared, moreover, that with the Russian army in its present condition the passage of the Danube and its subsequent march on the Balkan will, to be successful, require a greater sacrifice of life and a larger supply of men than Russia has at present at her command.

It is evident also that the determined and resolute attitude of Turkey has not failed of late to enlist sympathisers in Germany; and if she has not risen in the consideration of the German nation she has not fallen in the estimation of military men, as Russia is perceptibly doing.

The Emperor, if I am correctly informed, continues more strongly to deplore the neutral policy of Prince Bismarck, to whom His Majesty attributes anti-Russian sympathies, and would be disposed to support the demands of Russia if peace could be concluded before an attempt were made to cross the Danube.

His Majesty's *entourage*, whilst deploring the adverse circumstances which have hitherto attended the progress of the Russians, continue to look upon the invasion of Turkey as a *fait accompli*; that the terms Russia must exact from Turkey must be proportionate to her sacrifices, and that the successful issue of the campaign is the only safeguard against the Slav and other revolutionary committees in Russia.

The German military authorities, who anticipated, when war was declared, that the passage of the Danube would be effected with no very great difficulty or loss of time, are now disappointed at the value they at first set on Russian military organization; on the other hand, they are not sorry to see the Russian army put to the test, and its weakness exposed.

The passage of the river, though a certainty in their opinion, cannot now be accomplished without having to overcome difficulties which should never have presented themselves.

They also think that the advantages gained in Asia might eventually prove fruitless if the insurrection in the Caucasus be allowed to extend, and they think it not impossible that the movements of the Turkish Commander-in-chief, in luring the

Russians from their base of operations to and beyond Erzeroum, may indicate his intention to embark a large force at Samsoon or Trebizonde to make a dash on their communications between Poti and Tiflis.

In short, the general tone of the press is apparently less antagonistic to Turkey, and that of the official or semi-official papers less obsequious to Russia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 479.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 24, 1877, 5·55 P.M.*

FOLLOWING is an extract from a telegram sent to the Viceroy :—

"The Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs spoke to the Russian Minister here the other day respecting Karee Kala, claiming that district as Persian, but his representations on this subject were met with an evasive assurance that Russia will not take possession of any places to which Persia has a just claim.

"The Upper Atrek Valley is peopled by Koords acknowledging allegiance, but not always submissive to Persia."

No. 480.

Mr. Taylour Thomson to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Tehran, June 24, 1877, 7·25 P.M.*

THE Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs stated yesterday to Secretary of Legation that Goklans of Karee Kala had replied to Russian demand that they were Persian subjects. That they held a document to that effect issued under authority by Government of Boujnoord, and that they have been directed to hold to that declaration; that having claimed this territory as Persian, and no exception having been taken thereto by Russian Envoy, he thought a protest now would excite animosity against Russia, but that the Persian Government would maintain the justice of their claim to all the territory along the valley of the Upper Atrek, and now protest most formally against all interference with it, if Her Majesty's Government would give them their moral support at St. Petersburgh, on the ground of the understanding between the two Governments to respect the integrity of Persian territory. Communicated to Viceroy.

No. 481.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)*

(Telegraphic.) *Rustchuk, June 24, 1877, 11 P.M.*

RUSTCHUK to-day hotly bombarded from opposite side five hours, commencing 3 o'clock. Fire at first directly on each quarter consecutively, but about 6 o'clock deliberately turned on Consulates. British, facing Russian batteries, with large Union Jack flying, destroyed by four consecutive shells. French struck, and all narrowly escaped. I being here in interest of Christians, protégés of Russians, Consulates should not be objects of their fire. If repeated, our position untenable. Colleagues telegraph identically.

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* Repeated to Paris.

No. 482.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 25, 1877.*

OFFICIAL telegram publishes this morning that a small force of Russians crossed Danube at Galatz, and occupy Bondjak on right bank on night of 21st instant.

General Zimmerman occupied Matchin on 23rd June. Direct communication between Braila and Matchin are being established.

No. 483.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 25, 1877.*

TWO fresh army corps are entering Roumania, one by way of Bolgrad, and the other through Moldavia.

Giurgevo has been very severely injured by the latest Turkish cannonade; the telegraph office and many public buildings totally destroyed.

No. 484.

The Earl of Derby to Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 25, 1877.*

TELL Colonel Wellesley that I have been informed by the Russian Ambassador that Prince Gortchakow has telegraphed to him that he is going to Bucharest, and will see Colonel Wellesley, and invite him, on the part of the Emperor, to come to the Emperor's own head-quarters.

Her Majesty's Government wish Colonel Wellesley to accept this invitation when made to him by Prince Gortchakow, and to report the nature of the reception given to him and arrangements made for him; and, also, whether he thinks that his continuance there, under the circumstances, can be of further advantage.

No. 485.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 25.)

(Telegraphic.) *Vienna, June 25, 1877, 4·30 P.M.*

SULEIMAN PASHA is now reported to have effected a junction with Said Pasha; but, from the nature of the country, it is believed that the Montenegrins may still offer considerable resistance to the advance of the Turks.

No. 485*.

The Earl of Derby to Sir A. Buchanan.

(No. 223.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 25, 1877.*

I TRANSMIT to your Excellency herewith, for your information, and for communication to the Austrian Government, the accompanying correspondence on the subject of the interruption of the navigation of the Danube.*

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 486.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 26.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 24 Juin*, 1877.

LES informations qui nous parviennent du Caucase de source digne de foi nous révèlent les atrocités commises par les Russes contre la population Musulmane de cette contrée. L'armée Russe pille et incendie les villages Musulmans, oblige les habitants à se faire Chrétiens Orthodoxes sous peine d'être immédiatement mis à mort, et profane les mosquées et les écoles. Les femmes et les filles sont massacrées après avoir subi les derniers outrages, et les habitants mâles qui ont été épargnés sont envoyés en Sibérie. Toutes ces horreurs s'accomplissent par les ordres et sous les yeux des chefs de l'armée Russe, et en exécution d'une règle impitoyable qui a pour but l'anéantissement systématique et prémédité de toute la population Musulmane.

Nous apprenons en même temps que la ville d'Ardahan, occupée par les Russes, a été également le théâtre d'atrocités révoltantes. L'ennemi, après avoir procédé par le viol, le massacre et le pillage, a accompli des forfaits les plus épouvantables.

Nous signalons à l'indignation et à la réprobation de l'Europe entière ces crimes commandés froidement et de propos délibéré par les Agents de ce Gouvernement qui se proclame le défenseur des principes de la civilisation, et qui, naguère encore, à l'occasion de représailles commises en Bulgarie contre la volonté des autorités Impériales par une population exaspérée, cherchait à exciter contre nous le sentiment public et à nous faire considérer comme des barbares. Jamais le Gouvernement Impérial et notre loyale armée ne se souilleront de pareils crimes, et nos populations respecteront strictement les principes de l'humanité et les lois de la guerre, si audacieusement violés par l'ennemi de notre pays.

No. 487.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 193.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 25*, 1877, 6·45 P.M.

TURKISH Minister for Foreign Affairs informs me that after the Kurds had retaken Bayazid they dispersed, and have plundered Mussulman and Christian villages alike in all directions. Porte has sent orders to stop these excesses, but it fears that they have already been considerable.

No. 488.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 195.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 25*, 1877.

THE following information has been sent by the Turkish Commander-in-chief at Batoum to the Minister of war:—

"On the 23rd instant the Turkish irregulars were attacked by Russians at Jihad Tepe, near Batoum. Latter were repulsed with heavy loss, 1,000 killed. Turks lost 200. On the 24th the Russians unexpectedly took the offensive again. The irregulars were reinforced by Osman Pasha with two battalions. Later in the day the Commander-in-chief, Dervish Pasha, reached the scene of action with three more battalions. Russians were entirely defeated, losing 1,500 killed, and abandoning their positions."

No. 489.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 196.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 25*, 1877, 11·45 P.M.

I HAVE seen draft answer of the Porte to the Austrian note. It states that the measures taken on the Danube are provisional; that the treatment of neutral vessels on fluvial waters and on the sea must be different, but that this will not prevent respect for neutral property. Austrian vessels have not been confiscated, but only detained, to prevent their falling into the hands of the Russians and being used for war purposes; that the Porte agrees with the views of the Austrian Government about neutrality of the Danubian Commission, and has recognized its right to hoist its flag, only requiring that the Turkish flag should be hoisted with it; that it will respect its international engagements; and that it has given a proof of its desire to meet the wishes of the Austrian Government by agreeing to Austrian vessels ascending above Tinok. The note takes no notice of what is said in the Austrian note about the claim of Turkey to consider the Danube the line of defence of the Empire.

No. 490.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 198.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 26*, 1877, 11 A.M.

WITH reference to your telegram of 20th instant I have just received following answer to my representations:—

As neither the Cavass nor his son were British subjects, the Porte could not under the Constitution authorize the investigation proposed by Consul Skene, but is ready to send a proper functionary from Constantinople, who could institute a strict inquiry into all the proceedings connected with the two cases. Should this course not lead to a satisfactory result there will probably be no difficulty to have the cases referred to Constantinople, where the sentences of the local Court of Aleppo may be reversed by the criminal section of the Cour de Cassation. I am informed confidentially that the Porte is desirous that justice should be done and satisfaction given to our demands.

No. 491.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 26.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 26*, 1877.

THE Russian head-quarters have been moved to Alexandria, a place south-west of Bucharest.

No. 492.

The Earl of Derby to Lord Lyons.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 26*, 1877, 5 P.M.

I HAVE received the following telegram *en clair* from Consul Read, at Rustchuk, dated June 24, 11 P.M.:—

"Rustchuk to-day hotly bombarded from opposite side, five hours, commencing 3 o'clock. Fire at first directly on each quarter consecutively, but about 6 deliberately turned on Consulates. British, facing Russian batteries, with large Union Jack flying, destroyed by four consecutive shells. French struck, and all narrowly escaped. I being here in interest of Christians, protégés of Russians, Consulates should not be objects of their fire. If repeated, our position untenable. Colleagues telegraph identically."

Ascertain what steps the French Government propose to take in the matter.

No. 493.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Sandwith.

(No. 7.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 26*, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 31, Political, of the 7th instant, reporting the steps taken by you to induce the Cretan Christians to consent to elect a member to represent them in the Imperial Parliament at Constantinople, and to forego their scheme of demanding British protection; and I have to state to you that I approve the advice which you gave on these points to the Christian Deputies, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 494.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 44. Political.)

Beyrout, June 12, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a further despatch and its inclosures, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople relative to the state of affairs in the districts of Tripoli, Gebelé, and Lattakia.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 494.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, June 12, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a Report which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Blanche, respecting the state of affairs at Tripoli and in the district of Gebelé; also a copy of a Report from Mr. Vice-Consul Vitale on the disorders at Gebelé, and generally in the district of Lattakia, which merit more serious attention than the chief authorities of the vilayet seem disposed to bestow upon them, though I am informed that about 50 or 60 dragoons, with 200 soldiers, have been sent from Tripoli into the disturbed district.

As the substance of the petition mentioned by Mr. Blanche is given in the Report of that gentleman I do not consider it necessary to trouble your Excellency with it *in extenso*.

The situation is somewhat alarming, and is likely to become worse unless greater vigour and energy is displayed in putting an end to these troubles, on which the presence of foreign ships-of-war can exercise but little or no influence beyond preventing any attempt being made to plunder the towns on the sea-coast.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 494.

Acting Vice-Consul Blanché to Consul-General Eldridge.

Tripoli, le 29 Mai, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

L'EMOTION causée par l'assassinat qui fait l'objet de mon précédent rapport s'est à peu près calmée. Dès le troisième jour, l'assassin Mansour fit des aveux et nomma deux complices, dont l'un est un Rédif Musulman et l'autre un Chrétien. Le Rédif prouva son alibi, et fut relaché. Puis Mansour rétracta tous ses aveux, de sorte que l'instruction ne semble pas beaucoup plus avancée que le premier jour. Néanmoins, il est certain qu'il y a des complices. Les Musulmans ne doutent guère qu'il ne s'y trouve un des leurs; et il y a bien des apparances que Mansour a dit la vérité dans ses précédents aveux, malgré les témoignages qui ont affirmé l'alibi du Rédif. Cela seul a refroidi l'effervescence du premier jour, et puis la courte apparition du "Renard" a produit un effet salutaire, de sorte que de ce côté, je pense qu'il n'y a plus rien de menaçant pour la tranquillité du pays.

Mais nous avons maintenant les désordres des pays Ansariés. J'ai eu l'honneur de vous envoyer par le "Renard" une requête que m'ont adressée les notables Chrétiens du Canton de Murkab. Aujourd'hui, je vous envoie un nouveau document signé par les membres du clergé de Soûla et du Hossen. Il y a déjà deux mois qu'on parle en ville du mauvais état de ces districts. Mais rien de certain et authentique ne nous arrivait, et on pouvait espérer que le mal était restreint. Il est, au contraire, très-grave; toute la population Ansariée est littéralement soulevée et livrée sans frein à ses instincts de rapine et de brigandage. L'affaire du Markab n'est qu'un épisode dans cette véritable conflagration. Sur ce point il paraît positif que quelques Musulmans locaux

ont pris part aux agressions contre les villages Chrétiens. On dit même que c'est à leur instigation et sous leur direction que le désordre se commet; mais ce n'est pas probable, car les Ansariés n'ont besoin ni d'instigateurs, ni de Chefs Musulmans pour pratiquer le brigandage. Ils ont d'ailleurs un Chef très connu, et qui paraît être l'âme du mouvement actuel: c'est Havuache Beik, fils du fameux Ismaïl Khaïr Beik, qui, pendant la guerre de Crimée, a été employé par l'autorité pour maintenir l'ordre dans ces contrées, soulevées alors comme aujourd'hui; et qui, devenu rebelle lui-même, périt misérablement dans une expédition dirigée contre lui.

Havuache s'engage évidemment dans la carrière de bandit qui donna un grand renom local à son père. Il est le Chef de la grande tribu des Motasima, et demeure à Lokbé, village de la juridiction de Hama, dans le Kelbié. Il envoie ses hommes par troupes de 20 à 30 contre les villages Chrétiens, qu'il pille et rançonne. C'est une de ces bandes qui semblent avoir été dirigées sur le Markab. Elles se recrutent sur leur passage de tous les larrons qui pullulent dans les autres tribus Ansariées. Elles enlèvent les bestiaux, détruisent les récoltes, incendient les maisons, tuent les gens qui résistent ou protestent. Le document ci-inclus signale cinq ou six assassinats dans les districts de Sofita et du Hossen; et les nombreux faits qui y sont rapportés sont tout autres que ceux du Markab. Les Chrétiens de ces districts sont tout à fait sans défense, et leur condition est des plus lamentables.

Le seul remède à ce triste état de choses serait une expédition militaire, notre Moutsarrif Chaker Beik, avec qui j'ai de fréquentes conversations sur ce sujet, est profondément pénétré de la gravité et des difficultés de la situation. Il est mal secondé par son Caïmacam de Soûla et par celui de Djeblé: vieillard incapable dont il demand en vain, depuis longtemps, le remplacement. Il n'a qu'une force armée insignifiante; et au point où en sont les choses, malgré toute la bonne volonté que je lui connais, et dont il a donné des preuves fréquentes dans ces affaires même, il est dans l'impuissance absolue de lutter contre le mal. C'est de Damas que doivent partir aujourd'hui et la force matérielle, et l'impulsion nécessaire pour arrêter l'incendie, avant que les conséquences en soient devenues irréparables.

Je suis, &c.

(Signé) J. BLANCHE.

Inclosure 3 in No. 494.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Eldridge.

Lattaquié, le 5 Juin, 1877.

M. le Consul-Général,

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer qu'ayant appris que les gens inconnus qui ont saccagé les Chrétiens habitants du village "Bédiré," dont j'ai eu l'honneur de vous informer par mon rapport du 20 Mai écoulé, étaient des Musulmans et non des Ansaryehs. J'ai eu l'intention de me rendre à Jehlé et aux villages de Markab pour vérifier et avoir des renseignements exacts à l'égard des événements qui y ont eu lieu et pouvoir ensuite vous en soumettre un autre rapport à cet égard. Malheureusement je n'ai pas pu remplir ce devoir que m'impose la dépêche que vous m'avez fait l'honneur de m'adresser le 17 Avril dernier, parceque des bandes de brigands Ansaryehs de la montagne de "Kalbié" et "Beni-Ali," du district de "Géblé," sont venus depuis le 28 Mai dernier parcourir les villages de la plaine de Lattaquié et y commettre les mêmes actes de pillage que les "Metaouras" ont commis dans les villages de "Markab."

Ces brigands, qui sont assez nombreux, ont déjà saccagé deux villages, non loin deux heures de cette ville et menacent tous les autres villages de la plaine; ce qui inquiète beaucoup les habitants de cette ville qui ont des propriétés dans les villages en question; presque tous les habitants de cette ville, sans en excepter même les étrangers, y ont plus ou moins des intérêts qui souffrent énormement de cette mauvaise situation et qui sont exposés à souffrir davantage si le Gouvernement ne prend pas des mesures efficaces pour rétablir promptement le bon ordre et mettre fin au brigandage qui existe et qui pourrait tourner en pleine révolte de tous les Ansaryehs des deux Caïmacamliks de Lattaquié et de Gébelé.

Dans ce dernier cas, cette dernière ville courait le risque d'être attaqué par les montagnards dès qu'il n'y aura pas assez de troupes pour la défendre. Déjà la sécurité manque complètement sur les routes des deux districts en question.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALÉ.

No. 495.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 45. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, June 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith copy of a despatch and its inclosure, which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, respecting the state of affairs at Tarsus and Adana.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 495.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, June 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Tattarachi, reporting on the unsatisfactory state of affairs at Tarsus, and generally in the vilayet of Adana, where an Englishman appears to have met with ill-treatment at the hands of the irregular troops.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 495.

Vice-Consul Tattarachi to Consul-General Eldridge.

Sir, *Mersyna of Tarsus, June 5, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you that lately the towns of Tarsus and Adana are not in perfect order.

About 2,500 Turkish volunteers have been gathered from this province into the town of Adana, where they daily run about into the streets, carrying flags with them and armed, using the most improper words towards the Christians, telling them that they will kill every one of them. A mob of these volunteers entered a khan where an English gentleman was residing, and commenced to use improper words. Mr. Parsons, who is the English gentleman, at once went and made his complaints to the Valy of Adana, who, instead of tranquillizing him, ordered him out. Mr. Parsons then left Adana at once to come down here. On the road he has been molested by the Bashi-Bazouks, and nearly lost his life, had it not been for his revolver.

The 2,000 volunteers are daily expected here to embark for Constantinople. 600 horsemen are to leave for Kars by land, but their departure is postponed from day to day. Great excitement prevails among the Turkish population, and, with a Valy of Adana as his Excellency Mohammed Taofick Pasha, renders the situation of this province in a great danger.

The presence of European men of war may keep the country in peace.

I have, &c.

(Signed) N. TATTARACHI.

No. 496.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 46. Political.)

My Lord, *Beyrout, June 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship a copy of a despatch and its inclosure addressed by me this day to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to a fanatical display on the part of the Mussulmans of Acre and to the enrolment of Bashi-Bazouks for the war.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 496.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Beyrout, June 12, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith, for your Excellency's information, a copy of a report which I have received from Mr. Consular Agent Finzi, relative to a turbulent and fanatical display on the part of the Mussulmans of Acre and to the enrolment of volunteers or Bashi-Bazouks for the war.

Her Majesty's ship "Coquette" was at Acre on the 8th instant, and her presence had a reassuring effect on the Christians of that place. Similar demonstrations to those at Acre are of frequent occurrence at Sidon, especially during the night, greatly to the alarm of the Christian inhabitants of the place.

The number of equipped Bashi-Bazouks apportioned to the district of Beyrout, includes Sidon, is 282, the greater part of whom will be paid for in money, and most probably the men will be found amongst the Metualis, Kurds, Druses of the Hauran, and some of the nomad tribes of the desert, who will be attracted more by the hopes of plunder than with an idea of actually fighting the enemies of their country. As an effective military force, I do not consider the 3,000 to be raised in Syria as equal to a regiment of regular cavalry for service in the field.

I will report more fully on this subject when the men are actually enrolled.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure 2 in No. 496.

Report by Consular Agent Finzi.

MARDI 5 courant, à 10 heures du matin, un crieur public, accompagné d'une dizaine d'individus portant des étendards, tambours, et cymbals, appartenant aux mosquets d'Acre, parcouraient la ville criant: "O Musulmans! O croyants! accourez, l'étendard du Prophète vous appelle à lutter contre les ennemis de la foi."

A chaque pas des groupes de jeunes gens, enfants, et femmes, se joignant à une telle procession, faisant retentir les rues par leurs cris de blasphème, menace, et de mort.

Après avoir parcouru ainsi tous les quartiers de la ville, ils se rendirent au Palais du Gouvernement en nombre de 200 environ, et dans la grande cour du Serail formèrent un circle, au milieu duquel plusieurs élevèrent sur les épaules un individu qui maniant un bâton en guise d'épée en attitude de décapiter, il se mit à chanter à tue-tête la terrible chanson "Ya Marhaba, &c.," la répétant les autres avec des battements de mains.

Aussitôt terminée une telle chanson fut suivie d'un éclat de vomissement général de cris de mort, d'horribles blasphèmes, menaces, et imprécations les plus sales, d'abord contre les Russes, et ensuite contre tous les infidèles en général.

Pareille démonstration eut lieu en plein jour, et avec une liberté effrayante, dans le Palais Gouvernemental, à la présence des autorités locales, sans être empêchée par aucun des fonctionnaires; mais bien au contraire, le Cadi remplaçant le Mutessarif, qui se trouve depuis une dizaine de jours à Caïfa avec sa famille, se mêlant parmi les tumultueux, leur fit une espèce d'harangue, les qualifiant de braves et de lions, et les congédia après les avoir fait souscrire un enrôlement volontaire.

Le Gouvernement de la Sublime Porte réclame de la Syrie 3,000 hommes de cavalerie irrégulière de toutes les croyances religieuses avec leurs chevaux et habillements aux frais de la population.

Le territoire d'Acre a été censé à une tangente de 225 hommes dont la dépense a été calculée de 562,500 piastres, qui revient à 2,500 piastres pour chaque individu, compris le cheval.

L'ordre du Gouverneur-Général statue que la requisition doit frapper la population indistinctement suivant la statistique.

Le Gouvernement d'Acre prétend faire payer à la population Chrétienne les deux tiers de la totale somme de 562,500 piastres, et un tiers seulement à la population Musulmane, et cela à cause que la dernière a déjà contribué avec les Rédifs.

La population Chrétienne d'Acre s'oppose—

1. En considération de l'ordre du Gouverneur-Général.

2. Vue que la population d'Acre est calculée:—4,500 Musulmans et 1,000 Chrétiens.

La question reste indécise.

Acre, le 7 Juin, 1877.

No. 497.

Consul-General Eldridge to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 27.*)

(No. 18. Political.)

Beyrout, June 14, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a despatch which I addressed, on the 11th instant, to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to a recent tour made by me in the southern part of Mount Lebanon.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

Inclosure in No. 497.

Consul-General Eldridge to Mr. Layard.

Beyrout, June 11, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th ultimo, and to my telegrams of the 3rd and 10th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I left Beyrout on the 3rd instant for Bteddin, where I arrived the next day.

On the 6th I went to Muhtara, and thence, on the 8th, to Jezzin, descending on the 9th to Sidon, where Her Majesty's ship "Coquette" was awaiting to convey me to Beyrout, in order to save me the fatiguing hot and monotonous ride of eight hours along the sea-shore.

The general impressions I gathered during this journey entirely confirm the opinions I have expressed in my recent despatches on the state of Mount Lebanon, where I met with most of the notable Druse Chiefs, whom I have long known personally, and who expressed much pleasure in seeing me, and gave me the strongest assurances of their firm intention to live in harmony with their Christian brothers; and the Christians, on their part, expressed their perfect confidence in the assurances of the Druses—sentiments in which I did my utmost to encourage both parties, as being the best guarantee for their tranquillity and welfare.

All that I came in contact with were quite enthusiastic in their appreciation of the administration of his Excellency Rustem Pasha, who is certainly the most popular Governor-General that has yet been appointed to the Lebanon, and most deservedly so, in my opinion, as his rule is characterized by strict impartiality and justice towards all classes.

The small amount of interest shown by the Lebanese in the present war struck me as very remarkable. They seem generally to desire to preserve their present privileges, and do not occupy themselves much with what is passing without their own country, which they seem to consider, under the existing guarantees, as quite uninterested in the questions of the present time. They contrast their happy position with the state of anarchy, misrule, and confusion that exist in various parts of the vilayet surrounding them, where neither life nor property are safe, and are decidedly of opinion that their wisest course is to remain quiet and be thankful.

There are amongst them, however, a few discontented and unruly spirits, who intrigue for their own ends, but their action is checked and overawed by the immense majority of the advocates of peace and order.

So far as the southern portion of the mountain is concerned, I have every confidence, from what I saw and heard, that there is no danger of the tranquillity being disturbed; and I have also reason to believe that in the northern districts there is little fear of any disturbances, notwithstanding the attempts of certain clerical intriguers to create a feeling of dissatisfaction, in which they are strongly opposed by the Maronite Patriarch, who I believe to be imbued with a spirit of moderation, and a sincere desire to uphold the authority of the present Government, under which the Lebanon has enjoyed greater tranquillity than it has ever known before.

During my journey I was received with every mark of respect and distinction by the authorities and population of the Lebanon, which formed a striking contrast with the absence of even common civility with which I was met by the authorities and people of Sidon, where, from what I remarked during my short stay of three hours, the state of public feeling is anything but satisfactory, and I am now quite convinced of the truth of what I have previously reported respecting the fanaticism of the inhabitants, which the authorities seem to be afraid to check or control.

I have, &c.

(Signed) G. JACKSON ELDRIDGE.

No. 498.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 27.*)

(No. 61. Political.)

Scutari, June 14, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Sir Julian Pauncefote's despatch No. 14, Political, of the 24th ultimo, directing me to express my opinion to your Lordship regarding Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney's suggestion for the appointment of a Consular Agent at Avlona.

I can fully understand Mr. Blakeney's wish to have trustworthy information from all the centres in Lower and Middle Albania, and, if there is any person in Avlona whom he can unreservedly support for the post of Consular Agent, I think his recommendation ought to receive effect.

It would hardly be advisable, however, to name a native Christian or Greek of the kingdom unless it could always be remembered and understood that his reports would have a leaning in favour of the Hellenic cause. I am not of opinion that a native Christian or a Greek would distort facts, but any representations to the Turkish Government based on a report coming from such a person would be liable to be ill-received and weakened on the ground that it had originated from a source that was not impartial.

In the absence of Consular Agents in this district I endeavour to obtain my information of passing events from the most respectable of the native gentry and merchants, with whom I never lose an opportunity of becoming acquainted, and whose views and information I am not bound by official ties to take notice of unless I think it necessary. Unpaid agents are persons to whom I always feel under obligations, and therefore I am, as a rule, not in favour of these kind of officers; but Mr. Blakeney will be better able to judge whether the person he recommends ought to receive any sort of remuneration.

I have not heard here of any disaffection towards the Turkish Government prevailing in the district of Berat that can be connected with Hellenic aspirations. I understand that the country around Argyrocastro, as well as that of Berat, may witness disturbances, but these will probably come from the side of the Mohammedan inhabitants, who are feeling greatly the hardships arising from the exigencies of the existing war and insurrections. Nearly all the able-bodied men have been called under arms, the horses and cattle have been requisitioned, and now most of the taxes have been doubled. When their collection is attempted, it may be expected resistance will be offered, and the Turkish Government will then come to understand that a limit exists, even to the sacrifices which its Mohammedan subjects are disposed to make in favour of their faith.

I have, &c.

(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 499.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 27.*)

(No. 64. Political.)

Scutari, June 17, 1877.

My Lord,

GREAT activity and perseverance are required here for arriving at a correct knowledge of passing occurrences, and for obtaining an insight into the actual state of affairs; and, although I trust I do not neglect these qualities, I still feel that I must

frequently count upon your Lordship's indulgence, as many of my reports cannot but bear a meagre and colourless appearance.

Whenever a battle or skirmish is fought, I quickly hear both the Turkish and Montenegrin versions of it, but to check these accounts by those of impartial persons is a matter less speedily managed.

The victory claimed by each side at Krstac on the 4th instant was a most serious defeat of the Montenegrins. It not only cost them the lives of about 600 men, but it also opened the door to doubts on the loyalty of some of the Chiefs, and on the military capacity of a number of the others. On the other hand, Ali Saib Pasha's assorted success at Martinici was, as I reported, a decided reverse, with a loss of at least 500 killed and wounded.

This check kept the Turks near Spuz at bay until yesterday, when they attempted another forward movement, in the direction, this time, of Novo Selo, Plana, and Danilograd, and which again resulted in a repulse, with another 500 men *hors de combat*.

The Mohammedans boast that they, nevertheless, cut off 100 heads, but the report requires confirmation.

To-day the news has reached us—without any details of how it was effected—of the successful revictualling of Nichsich. This operation cannot be looked upon as otherwise than a disaster for the Montenegrins, whether they tried to prevent it or not. The moral effect on the Montenegrins is sure to be great, and they can no longer feel certain of preventing the junction of the three Turkish armies that are converging towards each other in the direction of Ostrog.

It is true that Mehemed Ali Pasha instead of being at Medun has now arrived at Kolascin, and that Ali Saib Pasha is losing his men without moving beyond Kokoshovina, but the bulk of the Montenegrins are before Sulciman Pasha, who is driving them slowly against the corps of the other Generals.

Unless an unexpected victory, like that of last year at Vucidol, is gained, the Montenegrins must necessarily, ere many weeks pass, sue for peace.

The forces already collected by the Turks and which are being hourly increased from all the neighbouring provinces by the arrival of large bodies of Bashi-Bazouks and Mustahfiz, are sufficient to "eat up" in a few days the richest of provinces, and therefore to reduce, if let loose on it as conquerors, the already desolate Black Mountain to utter ruin.

From what I can ascertain from Turkish sources, I believe the military authorities now operating against Montenegro are being constantly urged by the Porte to press on their movements so as to speedily terminate the war, the 60,000 to 70,000 men here engaged being urgently required on the Danube.

Under these circumstances I feel sure that the first expression of a desire on the part of Montenegro to treat for peace would be favourably received by the Turks, and I, therefore, this day solicited, by telegraph, your Lordship's instructions as to the conduct I should observe in the event of the possible overtures arriving from Montenegro.

The fortunes of war are dependent on so many accidents that I trust your Lordship will not disapprove of my having thus troubled your Lordship should subsequent events not justify my present estimate of possibilities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) W. KIRBY GREEN.

No. 500.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877, 11·30 A.M.*

I HAVE just received following from the Sublime Porte:—

"Avis aux navigateurs concernant le mouillage de leurs navires dans le Détroit des Dardanelles, de la Mer Noire, dans le port de Smyrne, et celui de la Sude (Ile de Crète).

"Détroit des Dardanelles, côte d'Anatolie.—Les navires ne pourront mouiller que sur les points ci-dessous indiqués: Nagara-Hastahanè (hôpital au bas de Nagara), Kephes (Pointe des Barbiers) et au bas de Ile-Kirmez à Carandik. Côte de Roumélie—Killé (près Maïdos au-dessous de la batterie de Boghali), Havouzlar et Eski-Hissarlik.

"Détroit de la Mer Noire.—Le mouillage des navires est défendu à partir de la batterie dite Madjar-Tabiassi, sur la côte d'Anatolie, et celle dite Telli-Tabia sur la côte de Roumélie, jusqu'à la hauteur de Roumélie et d'Anatolie-Féneri. Le mouillage des navires n'est permis qu'en deça des dites batteries Madjar-Tabiassi et Telli-Tabia.

"Port de Smyrne.—Les navires ne pourront mouiller que dans l'intérieur du port de Smyrne. Le mouillage sur les points compris à partir d'un mille avant d'arriver en face du fort Yeni-Kalé, jusqu'à l'entrée du port même de Smyrne, est défendu.

"Port de la Sude.—Les navires ne pourront mouiller sur aucun point à partir d'un mille de distance du port de la Sude jusqu'à l'entrée du dit port. Le mouillage n'est donc permis que dans l'intérieur du port même.

"Les navires qui traverseront les points interdits au mouillage des bâtiments auront le soin de ne pas laisser leurs ancres à la traîne, mais les avoir au haut de l'écubier et bien caponnées."

No. 501.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 200.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877, 11·50 P.M.*

IT has been found that the Turkish Minister of Marine has given a pass to a ship belonging to Valiano and Co., of Marseilles and Taganrog, to go to and return from a Russian port in the Black Sea, in order, it is pretended, to fetch a cargo of butter for the Palace. Strong representations have been made to Safvet Pasha on the subject, and he admits that the matter is grave. It is suspected that the Company in question has bribed somebody at the Palace to obtain this pass in order to protect valuable cargoes.

No. 502.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 201.)
(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 26, 1877, 11·55 P.M.*

PORTE is sending Circular to Agents abroad complaining that the Russian armed steamer that captured the three Turkish merchant-vessels near Heraklı destroyed them with torpedoes, two of them with their crews. The Porte protests against this unnecessary act of barbarity.

No. 503.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 202.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, June 27, 1877, 11·45 A.M.*

THE Turks seem to have obtained a considerable success on the 21st near Delibaba, but with much loss. I have no details from Kemball, as his telegrams, notwithstanding distinct promises of the Porte, upon which no reliance can now be placed, appear to be stopped.

No. 504.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Bucharest, June 27, 1877.*

RUSSIANS have crossed the Danube in very large numbers at Zimnitza. No resistance.

Head-quarters of the Grand Duke now in Bulgaria. Russian outposts 30 miles south of Danube.

No. 505.

Consul Kirby Green to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *Scutari, June 27, 1877.*

JUDGING from the number of wounded during the late fighting, the losses of the Turks must have been very heavy; the mutilated are numerous. Details and result given by post.

No. 506.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27, 2·30 P.M.)

(Telegraphic.) *Paris, June 27, 1877, 12·20 P.M.*

MINISTER for Foreign Affairs has requested Russian Ambassador here to urge that care be taken that the foreign Consulates at Rustchuk be not fired upon by the Russian batteries.

His Excellency does not seem disposed to make any strong remonstrance with regard to what has already occurred.

He has informed the French Consul that it would be inconsistent with his dignity to leave Rustchuk unless his colleagues should do so.

No. 507.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 27.)

(Telegraphic.) *St. Petersburgh, June 27, 1877.*

IS it necessary to act on your despatch No. 253 in regard to proposed Admiralty Certificate for coal, as my despatch No. 270 of May 25 appears to satisfy all requirements. A fresh application may only produce confusion.

No. 508.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 27, 1877, 3·15 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram No. 198, ask the Porte to allow Consul Skene to be present at the inquiry as a spectator in order that he may report the proceedings to Her Majesty's Government.

No. 509.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 240.) *Foreign Office, June 27, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 616 of the 14th instant, stating that you had addressed strong representations to the Porte on the subject of the recent outrages reported by Acting Consul Barker to have taken place at Monastir and elsewhere; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve your proceedings in this matter, as well as the steps which you have taken to bring to the notice of the Ottoman Government the various robberies and excesses, in different parts of the country, which have been reported to you by the British Consular Agents in Turkey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 510.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 241.) *Foreign Office, June 27, 1877.*

Sir,

YOUR despatch No. 587 of June 9 has been received, in which you report the substance of a conversation with Demitraki Effendi on the state of affairs in the Dobrutscha; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the representations which your Excellency has addressed to the Turkish Ministers, urging them to put a stop to the depredations of the Circassians in the Dobrutscha and elsewhere.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 511.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 242.) *Foreign Office, June 27, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 598, Confidential, of 11th June, in regard to the state of the relations between Turkey and Greece; and I have to inform you that Her Majesty's Government approve the advice which you have given to the Turkish Ministers, that they should avoid giving grounds for an accusation against Turkey of having hostile intentions against Greece.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 512.

Safvet Pasha to Musurus Pasha.—(Communicated to the Earl of Derby by Musurus Pasha, June 27.)

(Télégraphique.) *Constantinople, le 26 Juin, 1877.*

AU mépris des conditions et des règles auxquelles les guerres maritimes ont été de tout temps soumises, la Russie vient d'imprimer à ses attaques sur mer un caractère indigne de notre époque.

Voici quelques faits qui donnent une idée de la manière dont cette Puissance entend respecter les principes du droit des gens à l'égard des non-combattants :—

Le Mercredi, 20 Juin, vers les 11 heures du matin, un bateau Russe est venu aborder un navire de commerce sous pavillon Ottoman, ancré à Aïdos, petite ville sur le bord de la Mer Noire, et y a mis des matières inflammables qui n'ont pas tardé à faire explosion.

Le même jour des steamboats porte-torpilles étaient dirigés sur trois bâtiments de commerce Ottomans, Capitaines Hadji Hassan, Hadji Féizi, et Serdar, ancrés devant Couri Chilé, à 15 milles de distance est d'Amasra. Les steamboats ont fait sauter les trois bâtiments, et une grande partie de l'équipage a péri.

Il est sans exemple, et d'ailleurs contraire à toutes les règles du droit international, que des navires de commerce aient été détruits de propos délibéré, alors qu'ils n'opposaient aucune résistance, et surtout que les équipages aient été sacrifiés sans qu'on leur ait donné le temps et les moyens de sauver leur vie. Ce sont ces principes et ces règles que l'ennemi est décidé à méconnaître, si l'on en juge par les faits qui viennent d'être cités et qui défient toute contradiction.

En signalant au monde entier les procédés inouïs au moyen desquels la Russie entend se servir des conquêtes de la science moderne, nous protestons contre ces attentats à l'humanité et au droit des gens, et nous prions les Cabinets de l'Europe d'en prendre acte au nom de la conscience publique révoltée.

No. 513.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Taylour Thomson.

(No. 43.) *Foreign Office, June 27, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 62 of May 4, reporting the substance of a conversation which you had with the Persian Minister for Foreign Affairs on the 3rd ultimo, relative to the attitude of Persia towards Turkey; and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government approve the language held by you on that occasion to the Persian Minister, as reported in your above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.

(Signed) DERBY.

No. 514.

Memorandum as to the Proposals which are stated to have been made in 1868 *for the Union of Crete to Great Britain.*

Consul Sandwith, No. 30; June 4, 1877.

CONSUL SANDWITH states that a leading Cretan Chief* has recently informed the British Vice-Consul at Canea, that in 1868, when Mr. Erskine was Her Majesty's Minister at Athens, he (Mr. Erskine) inquired of him (the Chief), when discussing the question of the Cretan insurrection, why the Cretans did not try to be united to Great Britain; but, on looking into Mr. Erskine's despatches of that date, no such advice is reported to have been given by him.

Mr. Erskine, No. 31; February 26, 1868.

What passed was this: In February, 1868, a Cretan Chief, name Kostaros Veludachi, or Costaros Veloudakis, addressed a letter from Syra to Mr. Erskine, as well as to the other heads of Missions at Athens, accompanied by a pamphlet, in which it was stated that the Chief and his countrymen were prepared to suffer any extremities rather than again submit to the Turkish rule.

Mr. Erskine forwarded home a copy of this letter, together with a *précis* of the contents of the pamphlet, which was addressed to the Cretans by S. A. Stavroudi, and in doing so he remarked that the Greek Government were too much engaged in preparations for the electoral struggle, which was then approaching, to devote much of their attention to foreign affairs, or to the Cretan question; but that he had been told that M. Delyanni, in speaking confidentially to his friends, invariably maintained that things had gone too far in Crete for any arrangement short of annexation to Greece to be feasible. Mr. Erskine added that M. Delyanni, by this language, only wished to show that he was not less desirous than his predecessors to accomplish the liberation of Crete, but that he (Mr. Erskine) still thought that if England, France, and Russia could agree on some scheme of accommodation, short of annexation, to be imposed upon Turkey, it might also be imposed upon Greece without the necessity of employing force.

Consul Dickson, No. 30; April 30, 1868.

In April following the same Cretan Chief addressed a letter to Consul Dickson at Canea, in which he stated on behalf of himself, his colleagues, and the rest of the insurgent population, that, as they considered that Europe had abandoned the Cretans to their fate, and bitter experience had taught them that their hope of the island being annexed to Greece could not be realized, they had come to the conclusion that the only way for settling the Cretan question, and thus sparing the island further bloodshed and devastation, would be to appeal to Her Majesty's Government for their *mediation* in the matter.

Mr. Erskine, No. 66; May 9, 1868.

But on the 9th of the following month a French gunboat arrived at the Piræus, bringing despatches for the French Consul at Canea, in which it was stated that a party amongst the Cretan insurgents had requested Consul Dickson to forward a petition to Her Majesty's Government, asking to be placed under the *protection* of Great Britain. The French Minister at once called upon Mr. Erskine, and asked him to communicate upon the subject with Lord Stanley by telegraph; but Mr. Erskine assured the French Minister that the statement was altogether untrue, or at least that it was only so far founded on fact that Captain Costaros had written to Consul Dickson to request the *good offices* of Her Majesty's Government, and that Mr. Dickson had replied that he could not interfere in matter in any way beyond forwarding the document to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople. Mr. Erskine then "declined to do anything which could lend," as he

* He does not give his name.

expressed it, "to give additional currency to so absurd and mischievous a story;" which reply was approved by Lord Stanley.

To Mr. Erskine, No. 37; May 19, 1868.

In reporting to Lord Stanley that he had received from Consul Dickson a letter from the Cretan chiefs and insurgent population applying for the *mediation* of the British Government, Mr. Elliot stated that the Russian Ambassador, General Ignatiew, had mentioned to him that he had been consulted by various influential Greeks upon the expediency of proposing that Crete should be placed under the *protection* of Great Britain, adding that he himself would see it with pleasure; to which Mr. Elliot replied that when Her Majesty's Government declined to join with the other Governments in the steps taken by them with regard to Crete, it was certainly not with a view to assuring to themselves a more direct independent interference, and that a proposition such as the Ambassador had mentioned to him could not have any practical result.

Mr. Elliot, No. 158; May 12, 1868.

Consul Dickson subsequently informed the Cretan Chief Costaros that, in certain eventualities, the British Government might, in common with all the other Powers of Europe, recommend the Porte to treat the Cretan insurgents with the leniency and consideration, and that it rested with him and the other Chiefs whether to accept the *mediation* of Her Majesty's Government to this extent, but he added that he could not hold out the slightest expectation of any further protection being given.

Consul Dickson, No. 35; May 23, 1868.

Mr. Elliot did not quite approve of this letter, and he informed Consul Dickson that it contained a direct offer of mediation which was not contemplated in his instructions, and Consul Dickson was instructed by Lord Stanley to explain this to the Cretan Chiefs if necessary.

To Mr. Elliot, No. 163; June 15, 1868.

To Consul Dickson, No. 3; June 16, 1868.

In the following month, June 1868, certain Cretans, natives of Retimo and other provinces, called upon Mr. Erskine and requested, on behalf of their countrymen, the *good offices* of Her Majesty's Government in putting a stop to the conflict which had so long devastated the Island of Crete; and in reporting the result of their interview, Mr. Erskine stated that he informed them that "it appeared to him quite useless to leave them the least hope that Her Majesty's Government would interfere on their behalf," and that "he felt quite sure that Her Majesty's Government would listen to no overture tending to the separation of Crete from Turkey."

Mr. Erskine, No. 86; June 3, 1868.

Mr. Erskine then went on to state that the same evening two other Cretan refugees called upon Consul Merlin to request his advice in regard to a report which had reached them that the British Government were willing to assist the Cretans in obtaining the *Protectorate* of Great Britain for the island, and that Consul Merlin replied that they had been grossly deceived on that head, as nothing was further from the intention of Her Majesty's Government than to seek or to accept such a Protectorate.

Shortly after this, another body of Cretans called upon Mr. Erskine, but he declined to see them, and requested them to state what they wanted in writing, which they did, and asked for British *mediation*. Mr. Erskine replied to this letter, but no proposal was made for British *protection*.

Consul Dickson, No. 39; June 26, 1868.

To Consul Dickson, No. 4; July 15, 1868.

But, on the 18th June, the chief of the armed insurgents in Selinos, Captain George Georgiakakis, addressed a letter to Consul Dickson, in which he solicited, on behalf of the whole insurgent population of the district, the *intervention* of the British Government, in order that the Island of Crete might be formed into an independent Principality under British *protection*, upon which Consul Dickson was instructed by Lord Stanley to inform the petitioner that "it would not be consistent with the policy of the Government to accede to their request, which, therefore, could not be granted," which he did.

Consul Dickson, No. 535; August 1868.

In the following month, M. Costaros Veludakis addressed another letter to Mr. Erskine, inclosing a Decree from the so-called General Assembly of Crete, requesting that Her Majesty's Government would take upon themselves the task of putting an end to the conflict then raging in the island.

Mr. Erskine, No. 114; July 23, 1868.

In this letter the Cretan Chief said: "The idea I can give you, as far as I am able, of the general resolution of the Cretan population is that they consider it impossible for them to accept anything inferior, or anything short of the solution *which you verbally expressed to me*, otherwise they are fully decided never to lay down their arms."

Consul Dickson, No. 48; July 29, 1868.

In sending home a copy of this letter, Mr. Erskine remarked as follows:—

"As I perceive that M. Costaros, at the close of his letter of the 18th instant, alludes to some alleged views of mine with regard to the solution of the Cretan difficulty, I think it right to assure your Lordship that I have not the least conception to what M. Costaros refers. The only conversation I ever had with M. Costaros was upon the occasion of his calling upon me before he returned to Crete, when I endeavoured, but without success, to find out from him on what terms it would be possible to induce the insurgents to lay down their arms. M. Costaros appeared to be much embarrassed as to how he should answer my question, and at last said that, being a plain, uneducated man, and quite unused to deal

with such matters, he should prefer replying to me in writing, as he had, in his secretary, a young man who possessed his full confidence, and who was perfectly competent to draw up an intelligent statement of his views, and M. Costaros then left me without my having expressed to him any opinion as to the conditions upon which a pacification of Crete might be effected, beyond a general exhortation to him to make peace with the Turks on the terms offered by Aali Pasha.

"As I do not gather from the Decree of the 'General Assembly' any distinct notion of the part Her Majesty's Government are expected to perform in the proposed negotiations for peace, M. Costaros' previous letter to me of the 19th February last may throw some light upon the views of the insurgents, which are in that letter stated to be a determination to abandon 'the whole country to total ruin rather than again submit to the yoke of Turkey.'"

Mr. Erskine, No. 116; July 25, 1868.

Two days later, three other Cretans called upon Mr. Erskine to know what was thought of the Decree of the so-called General Assembly, when he informed them that he was afraid Lord Stanley would consider the terms of the Decree too vague to become the groundwork of a negotiation with the Porte.

Mr. Erskine added that he did his utmost to find out from the Chiefs exactly what they wanted, but that, although they were shrewd, energetic men, they had naturally very vague notions as to what was called autonomy, and only insisted that no attempt should be made to place them under the rule of Turkish functionaries. Mr. Erskine then remarked to Lord Stanley that he thought that, if negotiations were opened, the insurgents might be induced to accept as their Governor some foreigner of acknowledged ability, unconnected with either of the Great Powers, whilst the Porte might content itself with a less direct share in the government of the island than it has hitherto contemplated, with the right of maintaining a garrison in the principal strong places, and with the payment of a fixed annual contribution by the Cretan people; and he added that the arrangement adopted for the administration of the Lebanon in 1861 had worked satisfactorily, and had secured several years of peace in that quarter.

Mr. Erskine, No. 119; July 30, 1868.

On the 30th July Mr. Erskine forwarded to Lord Stanley a copy of a private letter which he had received from Consul Dickson, in which he said: "Sawas Pasha asserted to me, having obtained positive information as to the following, that Gogonis, an influential insurgent Chief of Apokorona, while at Athens, lately had had an interview with the King, and subsequently with you; that you had recommended to him to get the Cretans to draw up a Petition, to be numerously signed, praying for an exclusive British intervention in Crete, and that you would undertake to support the Petition. In consequence the Pasha remarked, I (Mr. Dickson) received the letter from the Provisional Government and Decree of the General Assembly." Mr. Erskine then observed upon this letter as follows: "As I understand that Sawas Pasha has made this statement the subject of a special Report to his Government, I think it right to assure your Lordship that there is not, as far as I am concerned, the least shadow of foundation for what has been asserted by Sawas Pasha."

* * * * *

"The Turkish Minister and all Athens have been aware, for some time past, that the insurgents were about to ask Her Majesty's Government to interfere in their behalf, but I have never, either directly or indirectly, encouraged any such step; and, most fortunately, to avoid the possibility of any future misunderstanding on the subject, I stated to M. Gogonis, in writing, the only terms on which, in my opinion, Her Majesty's Government were likely to plead their cause with the Porte."

Lord Stanley declared the statement made by Mr. Erskine to be quite satisfactory.

Mr. Erskine, No. 128; August 26, 1868.

In the following month Mr. Erskine reported that he had granted an interview to two more Cretans, who handed to him a list of the names of most of the principal men in the various parts of the island, who, it was asserted, were prepared to accept any reasonable conditions "which Her Majesty's Government might undertake to recommend to the consideration of the Porte." They added that "the whole country was in favour of annexation to Greece, but that if Her Majesty's Government thought that such a measure was quite out of the question, the majority of the Cretan people would acquiesce in some scheme which would secure to them the enjoyment of a reasonable amount of self-government under the sovereignty of the Sultan."

Mr. Erskine then said:—"I told these men that I had no authority to discuss these matters with them at all, and that the decision of Her Majesty's Government would reach them through the British Consul in Crete; but they implored me to acquaint your Lordship fully with the real state of their affairs;" and he added, "I really believe that things have now come to such a pass that these poor people would willingly lay down their arms if they felt sure that the conditions nominally granted would be adhered to by the Porte; but they have so little faith in the Turks that I see no possibility of this war being brought

to a close unless Government will take the initiative in persuading the Porte to consent to negotiate with its insurgent subjects under the mediation of one or more of the Great Powers."

To Mr. Elliot, No. 241; September 17, 1868.

Mr. Elliot also addressed a despatch to the Secretary in which he alluded to the above remarks of Mr. Erskine, but Lord Stanley replied that "Her Majesty's Government had no intention of departing from their already avowed policy as regards Crete."

Mr. Erskine, No. 171; November 18, 1868.

Mr. Erskine does not appear to have reported any further interviews with Cretans; but, writing on the 18th November, 1868, he alluded to a statement made in a letter from a M. Jean Couvellas to M. Sphakianaki, in which he (Mr. Erskine) was mentioned as having prescribed a particular line of conduct to the Cretans, and he proceeded to repeat (as he had already on previous occasions asserted) that it was "quite untrue that he had been in any way instrumental, either directly or indirectly, in suggesting to the insurgents the course they thought proper to pursue in claiming the protection of Her Majesty's Government."

(Signed) E. HERTSLET.

Foreign Office, June 27, 1877.

No. 515.

Consul Zohrab to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 53. Political.)

My Lord, *Erzeroom, June 10, 1877.*

THE intelligence I receive from Van indicates a complete state of lawlessness in that province. The Koords, I hear, are going about the country in bands, robbing, murdering, and outraging the Christian women. The American missionaries at Van state, in letters received here, that the danger to life is so great, they have been obliged, for the safety of their wives and children, to take to the lake, and now live in their boat, going to remote villages at night for safety. In Van itself, the Koords are breaking into houses and shops in open day, and people are stopped and stripped even within the walls of the Government Palace. These depredations are committed by the Koords who have been collected for the defence of the country. These men, however, instead of proceeding to the front, loiter in the villages on their line of march, and there perpetrate excesses too horrible to relate.

I am also informed that the Governor of the Province, Hassan Pasha, is so apprehensive of a general massacre of the Christians, that he is obliged, having no force with which to repress the Koords, to permit robbery and rape, in the hope that these excesses will satisfy the Koords, and the people may be allowed to escape with their lives.

I have, &c.

(Signed) JAS. ZOHRAB.

No. 516.

Consul Reade to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 8. Political.)

My Lord, *Rustchuk, June 13, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, copy of a despatch I yesterday addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte on the subject of my telegram to your Lordship of the 10th instant, and which was identical with one sent to Mr. Layard on the same day.

I repeat, my Lord, that I have undeniable and disinterested proof of what I have stated, and I fear the worst accounts will come from Roumania, as Circassians have been overheard talking of women and children as well as men who had evidently been ill-treated, if not worse.

The Bulgarians here are absolutely afraid of speaking from fear of the consequences.

These Circassians are being sent over by night at many points along the Danube, here where there are Consuls rarely if ever.

As they are neither paid nor fed by the Government, I do not see what else can be expected from such lawless miscreants than what we hear of.

I have offered the following suggestion to Mr. Layard:—

There is here at present a certain Dilaver Pasha, Rear-Admiral, and a Circassian; I know him well, and from what I know of his sentiments on the subject, I am of opinion that were the whole of the Circassians placed under his orders, and he held responsible, a stop might be put to the horrors I have reported, and that these men might be of good use to the Porte.

Dilaver is a very firm and energetic officer, and as he appears to be looked up to by the Circassians, I think his employment in the way I have mentioned might be a success.

Whilst being held responsible, however, he should have full power over these men.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE.

Inclosure in No. 516.

Consul Reade to Mr. Layard.

Rustchuk, June 12, 1877.

Sir,

ON the 10th instant, I heard from a disinterested person who had just returned from a trip along the Danube, such a deplorable account of the doings of the Circassians (who are being amassed and armed by the Government along the Danube) amongst the Christian villages, that I deemed it my duty to send your Excellency the following telegram:—

"British Ambassador, Constantinople. Turks are amassing and arming Circassians along the Danube. These are committing atrocities of every description amongst Christian villages on this side, and are sent across by night, whence they return, many covered with blood. Authorities will deny, but I have most undeniable disinterested ocular evidence. Send home. Consul Reade."

These men are only armed by the Government, and are consequently left to maintain themselves and their horses; and, as most or all of them are ruthless brigands, and quarter themselves on the Christian villagers, the terrible position of the latter may therefore be readily imagined.

A party of them go into a village, distribute themselves amongst the Christian houses, obliging the owners to look after their horses, and to supply all their wants. If what is called for is not at once produced, the unfortunate villager is either severely beaten with the knout every Circassian carries in his hand; or, when this happens not to be at hand, his sword is drawn, and the unfortunate man is struck with it. One man had his hand cut nearly in two, as he was absolutely unable to produce what was ordered, and my informant stated that, when he saw it a few days after, he could perceive symptoms of gangrene. This is only one out of hundreds of cases.

The women and children, moreover, I am positively assured, do not escape the brutality of these miscreants, of which numerous instances could be brought forward.

They are also sent across into Roumania by night, and my informant saw a party that had just returned, some of whom were bedaubed with blood, and it was found out that they had been massacring peasants.

A Bulgarian was so brutally ill-treated by a Circassian, that a bystander informed the Mudir of the place, who sent for the man and asked him if what he had heard was true. The poor trembling wretch actually replied that it was not, and was then dismissed.

My informant stated that when he was afterwards asked why he had denied what so many had witnessed, replied simply because, had he not done so, he would not have been alive twenty-four hours, and this is the case all along the Danube.

No one at present can circulate alone in the province, particularly on horseback or in carriages, as these Circassians pounce upon every horse they meet.

In short, from all I have heard from other and trustworthy sources, the present situation of these Christians is terrible in the extreme, and this state of things is sure to continue and increase if it is not peremptorily stopped from Constantinople. It is utterly in vain to attempt to keep these Circassians in any kind of order, except, perhaps, by putting them under stern and well-selected regular officers, who should

be held responsible for them, with power to summarily inflict punishment when necessary.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. READE

No. 517.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 621. Confidential.)
Therapia, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 12th instant, I had an opportunity of speaking confidentially yesterday to Karatheodori Effendi, the Musteshar, or Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with regard to the complaint of Colonel Siborne that the Turkish authorities at Sulina would not agree that the flag of the Danube Commission alone should be used on buildings and vessels belonging to that body. I pointed out to his Excellency the danger to which the property of the Commission is exposed by being forced to fly the Ottoman flag during the hostilities now taking place on the river. Karatheodori Effendi replied that the Porte attached considerable importance to this question. It could not formally and officially give its consent to the demand of the Commission that it should not be required to hoist the Turkish flag, as by doing so it would admit a principle which, there was reason to fear, might be turned against it hereafter. The Turkish Government suspected that Austria and Russia wished to obtain the neutralization of the Danube, and to prevent the river being hereafter used for warlike purposes of any kind. This would be the first step towards Turkey being called upon to destroy her fortresses on the Danube. This would, no doubt, suit Russia very well, but Turkey would never consent to deprive herself of her main line of defence in the north, and thus to expose herself to invasion at any moment. It was on this account that Turkey refused to give the required sanction for the use of the neutral flag of the Commission in her waters. She had no other objection to it, and was quite willing that it should be used for the protection of the property of the Commission combined with that of Turkey. But, Karatheodori Effendi hinted, there was no reason why the Commission should not omit to hoist the Turkish flag when there was no Turkish authority near who had a right to interfere in the matter.

I spoke this morning on this subject to Count Zichy, who told me that his Government had been in communication with the Porte with respect to it, and that, as in such matters they wished to show deference to Turkey, they had accepted the explanations given by her, and had allowed the matter to drop. I might venture to suggest that we should do the same.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 518.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 622.)
Therapia, June 16, 1877.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 160 of the 4th instant, relative to the proclamation of the state of siege at Constantinople, I have the honour to forward herewith a copy of the *note-verbale*, which, in conformity to your Lordship's instructions, I have addressed to the Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 518.

Note-Verbale.

THE proclamation of the state of siege in Constantinople by the Porte was duly communicated by Her Majesty's Ambassador to Her Majesty's Government, and at the same time Mr. Layard informed them of the assurances given to him by his Highness the Grand Vizier, that orders should be issued to the Turkish authorities not to molest in any way foreigners residing in the city in applying the law.

Her Majesty's Government have received his Highness' assurance with satisfaction, but Her Majesty's Ambassador is instructed by them to state to the Porte that they expect that those assurances will be strictly adhered to, and reserve to themselves the right of maintaining the privileges of British subjects under the Capitulations.

Therapia, June 16, 1877.

No. 519.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 623.) *Therapia, June* 16, 1877.

My Lord,

ZIA PASHA, who has shown marked incapacity as Governor of Damascus, and against whom I have been under the necessity of making, on several occasions, representations to the Porte, has been removed to the Vilayet of Koniah, and is succeeded by the Vali of that province, Omer Teizi Pasha, who changes places with him.

The French Chargé d'Affaires has also complained of Zia Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 520.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 624.) *Therapia, June* 16, 1877.

My Lord,

AS the English newspapers, which are generally ill-informed, persist in stating that the Sultan has proclaimed a "Jehad," or religious war, against the Christians, I think it right to inform your Lordship that such is not the case, and that the Imperial Decree announcing the war with Russia was couched in terms always employed in such documents. I have made inquiries in various quarters on the subject, and such is the result of them. The Sultan might, perhaps, be induced to call upon Mussulmans to enter upon a religious war, and some people believe that the time may come when he will do so; but it would be in a very different manner, and in very different terms.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 521.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 625.) *Therapia, June* 17, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a report which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Maling on the defences of the Dardanelles.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 521.

Confidential Report by Vice-Consul Maling on the State of the Defences of the Dardanelles.

THE only important military works for defending the passage of the Dardanelles are those situated in the "Narrows," or that portion of the Straits beginning at about thirteen miles from the southern entrance, and extending about three miles upwards. A line bisecting the "Narrows" leads in a direction nearly north and south.

At the entrance of the "Narrows," on the side of Europe, is the old Castle of Kilid Bahr, of which the lines have been extended southward, and form the modern fort of Namasghia, an earthwork of substantial construction made by a German officer, Bluhm. On this work are placed sixteen Krupp breech-loading rifled guns. The fort was intended to carry artillery mounted "en barbette," but an embrasured parapet is being constructed, though eight of the guns are still unprotected. There are also in the work one Krupp and two Armstrong guns, muzzle-loaders, for which no place seems to be designed. The work is of considerable size, but uncompleted, and has no barracks or lodging for the garrison.

On the old stone work at Kilid Bahr are eight common smooth-bores, and seven of the monster bronze stone-shot guns. The last named are not on carriages.

About 1,000 yards to the north is the Fort of Dermen Bouroun, an old stone-faced battery, remodelled into a substantial earthwork. It has twelve embrasures, with six Krupp and six smooth-bore guns; two of the former and three of the last-named are not yet mounted on carriages.

Further northward, and about a mile from Dermen Bouroun, is the old stone-built battery of Cham Bouroun, in which are ten smooth-bore guns.

The defensive system of the "Narrows" on the European side is closed by the Fort of Bovali, an unremodelled stone-work, with sixteen smooth-bore guns in embrasures. The position of Bovali Fort is a most commanding one, as its fire could enfilade the "Narrows" through the entire length.

On the Asiatic side the defences of the "Narrows" commence at the town of the Dardanelles (Chanak Kalessy), where the Sultania Castle faces the European works at Namasghia. The "Narrows" are about 1,500 yards wide at this point.

The Sultania Castle is an old stone-built fort mounting twenty-four common smooth bores and three monster stone-shot guns. The kind of carriage on which the latter are mounted does not allow of any lateral training being given to the gun.

At the southern extremity of the fort the stone rampart has been levelled, and a platform protected by earthworks has been got ready to receive the large Krupp gun which was lying for some time past at the Tophaneh, Constantinople, and has just been conveyed hither. The fire from this formidable piece of ordnance will command the approaches to the Narrows from the South, and it can also be brought to bear on objects arriving abreast of the work.

There are workshops at the Sultania Castle for the construction and repairs of wooden gun carriages and for ordinary blacksmith's work.

A double line of torpedoes, sixteen mines in all, has been placed between the Sultania and Namasghia forts, and connected therewith by wires for exploding the mines by electricity.

A mile northward is the Medgidieh fort. This important work, commenced about twenty years ago, has undergone a large amount of reconstruction by the German officer before mentioned, Bluhm.

It is a very substantial earthwork, and its thirteen guns placed on two faces are well sheltered by parapets and traverses. The seven guns on its southern face enfilade and sweep the narrowest part of the Channel between the Sultania and Namasghia forts. All its thirteen guns are Krupps. The fort has no barracks for troops.

Further northward is an old stone-built battery, called Kuousseh Bouroun, mounting fifteen obsolete smooth-bores.

The fort of Nagarah completes the defensive system of the "Narrows" on the Asiatic side. It faces Bovali fort. A long sand spit stretching into the Channel from Point Nagarah reduces the navigable width of the straits between Bovali and fort Nagarah to about 1,600 yards. The whole battery of Nagarah has sixteen smooth-bores, and in an earthwork on its southern face are eleven Krupp guns, of which only two are as yet in position.

The only remaining defences of the Dardanelles undescribed are the two Castles at the entrance: Koum Kaleh, at Cape Janissary, and Seddul Bahr, near Cape Hellas, on the Asiatic and European sides respectively. No works of recon-

struction have been undertaken at either of these places, and their armament consists only of obsolete guns.

All the forts, ancient and modern, are commanded by the ground behind them, and no works exist to defend them from attack on the land side.

Besides the monster gun, which is not yet in position, there are now altogether forty-seven Krupp guns (thirty-five mounted and twelve not mounted) divided between the four batteries of Namasghia, Dermen Bournou, Medgidieh, and Nagarah. The calibres of the forty-seven guns vary from 15 centimetres (6 inch) to 28 centimetres (11 inch). The two Armstrongs are 200 and 150 pounders.

The ordinary garrison of the forts is about 3,000 men, but the number at present does not exceed 1,500. They are artillerymen, are employed as labourers in completing the batteries, seem to have had little training, and their discipline is very lax.

From the Krupp guns actually in position a shotted round on one occasion has been fired to prove their strength or range.

The lights and beacons in the straits, with the exception of those at Capes Hellas and Janissary are no longer shown at night. The buoys marking shoals have not been removed.

(Signed) G. MALING, *Vice-Consul.*

Dardanelles, June 14, 1877.

No. 522.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 28.)

(No. 626.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 17, 1877.

I HAVE thought it desirable to make a strong representation to the Porte with respect to the excesses and outrages committed by the Circassians and other marauders in many parts of the country. I have the honour to inclose copy of a memorandum on the subject which I instructed Mr. Sandison to read and give to Safvet Pasha. His Excellency said that he was not sorry that I should have put my complaints in writing, as it would enable him to submit them to the Council of Ministers. He admitted that they were well-founded, and that the state of affairs which I described was such as to require immediate attention. He expressed his opinion that special High Commissioners ought to be sent into the districts infested by Circassians, with full powers to arrest those who were guilty of the crimes attributed to them, and to inflict the punishment of death upon them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 522.

Memorandum by Mr. Layard on Circassian Outrages.

(Confidential.) *Therapia, June* 15, 1877.

MR. LAYARD desires to call the earnest attention of Safvet Pasha to the reports which he receives from all parts of Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor of the terrible outrages and excesses committed by Circassians and other marauders apparently with the most complete impunity. A number of official reports to Mr. Layard on this subject have been submitted to his Excellency by Mr. Sandison. As to the general truthfulness of these there cannot be a doubt. Indeed his Excellency has frequently admitted it, and has promised that measures should be taken without delay for the security of life and property in the districts infested by these robbers and murderers.

The urgent requirements of the present war have no doubt compelled the Porte to remove to the seats of war the troops and police force previously employed in the maintenance of order and for the protection of the peaceable subjects of the Sultan. It would not, therefore, be a matter of surprise that under such circumstances there should be some increase of crime in the districts thus deprived of the necessary means of security. But the state of affairs now complained of goes much further than that. Circassians and others rove about, singly or in bodies, plunder villages (principally Christian), outrage and murder their inhabitants, and rob and maltreat those who venture to travel on the high roads.

Many villages, especially in the Dobrudcha, have been almost deserted in consequence of these shocking outrages. Even the German colonies in that district have suffered most severely from them. Appeal is made in vain for protection and justice to the Turkish authorities, who are either unable or unwilling to interfere.

Mr. Layard is informed that small parties of Circassians are now in the habit of crossing the Danube at night and of murdering every man, woman, and child that they may meet. They return in the morning covered with blood and boasting of their achievements. It is to be hoped that there may be some exaggeration in this statement, but it has been made on trustworthy authority.

Mr. Layard would venture to point out that the state of affairs which he has described is fraught with danger to the Porte, and to urge most earnestly upon his Excellency, of whose humane and equitable sentiments he does not entertain the slightest doubt, the imperative necessity of taking some effective steps to put an end to it. There are men who, Mr. Layard is assured, if employed by the Porte, would have sufficient influence over the Circassians to prevent their committing these lamentable excesses. If those who were guilty of them, instead of being allowed to remain at large, or if captured, to escape, were condignly and summarily punished, others might be deterred from committing the same crimes.

No. 523.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 28.)

(No. 627.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 18, 1877.

I HAVE questioned Safvet Pasha as to the relations between the Porte and Tunis. His Excellency assures me that they are very friendly and cordial, but that the Regency being very poor, Turkey has but little to expect from it in the shape of assistance during the present war.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 524.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 28.)

(No. 628. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of another letter written by the same person whose previous letters have been transmitted to your Lordship by me. The principal importance to be attached to them arises from the fact that they are submitted to the Sultan and the Grand Vizier, and have undoubtedly some influence upon the policy of the Porte. The writer has evidently access to good sources of information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 524.

Letter from Vienna.

Vienne, le 8 *Juin*, 1877.

LE lendemain du départ de ma dernière lettre le bruit a commencé à se répandre dans les sphères diplomatiques comme quoi M. Bismarck se serait mis en mouvement pour déterminer les Puissances principales à mettre la question de la paix sur le tapis. Il faudrait écrire toute une brochure pour résumer toutes les versions qui, depuis ces jours, ont été mises en circulation à ce sujet. D'après ce que j'en tiens de sources authentiques en voici ce qui mérite d'être relevé.

Mon correspondant de Berlin, un personnage très-important attaché à la Cour de l'Impératrice, m'en écrit ce qui suit : " Depuis cette époque où la question d'Orient est devenue sérieuse, M. de Bismarck, obligé d'un côté par l'Empereur à ne rien entreprendre contre la Russie ; mais, de l'autre côté, étant convaincu que les principaux intérêts de l'Allemagne en Orient sont identiques avec ceux de l'Autriche, a fait toujours son possible pour mettre l'Autriche sur ce pied, pour la stimuler et encourager

à faire opposition décidée et efficace aux empiètements de la Russie sur le droit Souverain de la Turquie: mais il n'a jamais été compris à Vienne; au contraire, ses agents lui mandaient continuellement que l'Autriche le soupçonnait de vouloir la pousser à une action en Orient qui lui préparerait des difficultés inextricables dont la Prusse, à un moment donné, pourrait profiter à son propre avantage, et au préjudice incalculable de la Monarchie Austro-Hongroise.

"Persévérant et tenace qu'il est en toute occurence, le Chancellier Prussien s'était réveillé, encore une fois l'hiver passé, pour déclarer d'abord dans une soirée dans son palais, et puis dans la Chambre, que la Prusse garantie à l'Autriche, quoi qu'il arrive, son territoire actuel. Cette déclaration n'avait d'autre but que d'inspirer courage à l'Autriche à se mettre en opposition active contre la Russie, soit par une défense sérieuse à adresser à cette Puissance à faire la guerre à la Turquie, soit par une intervention armée; mais cette démarche a été si peu comprise à Vienne que toutes les précédentes. Cette expérience," dit mon correspondant, "a complètement désenchanté le Chancellier, et depuis cette époque M. Andrassy n'est pour lui qu'un imbécile, l'Empereur François Joseph un homme sans discernement, et l'Autriche un cadavre. Malgré cette déception il défendra tout de même les intérêts commerciaux de l'Allemagne à l'Orient, et par là même les intérêts même de l'Autriche; mais il ne peut ni veut plus préserver la Monarchie Austro-Hongroise des préjudices politiques qui, après toute probabilité, résulteront pour elle de la réorganisation de l'administration des provinces Slaves de la Turquie, qui constitueront la base principale du Traité de Paix à conclure après la guerre.

"Le changement d'opinion auquel l'a forcé l'Autriche elle-même a déterminé M. Bismarck à empêcher la Russie autant que possible d'emporter des victoires trop éclatantes et trop avancées, qui ne sauraient qu'augmenter ses prétentions et la rendre plus difficile à la négociation de la paix. Il aurait en même temps gagné la conviction que, tandis que la Russie n'a pas de force matérielle à une guerre de longue durée et qu'elle ne peut pas espérer dans le cas de victoires les plus éclatantes, remporter des avantages valant ses sacrifices, la Turquie devra nécessairement fléchir après la première défaite, soit en Europe soit en Asie. Malgré cette conviction M. Bismarck n'a pas du tout commencé des négociations comme les journaux le suggèrent; il s'y est seulement apprêté, et en attendant il a saisi l'occasion du voyage de M. Schouvaloff, qu'il avait invité à Friedrichsruhe, pour s'entendre avec lui académiquement sur les conditions d'abord d'une entente entre la Russie et l'Angleterre, et puis de la paix à proposer à la satisfaction de toutes les Puissances.

"Il n'y a donc au fond," termine mon correspondant de Berlin, "rien de fait; mais l'on peut être à peu près sûr de ce que le premier fait de guerre d'une certaine portée déterminera le Chancellier Prussien à s'imposer aux deux belligérants, ainsi qu'aux autres Puissances, comme médiateur pour amener la paix."

Je crois que cette correspondance caractérise et définit la situation si exactement que je n'y ai pas un mot à ajouter.

Pour ce qui concerne l'Autriche je puis vous assurer que la façon dont M. Bismarck apprécie la position et la disposition des deux belligérants est complètement approuvée et adoptée par son Cabinet. Je vous dirai même plus. L'Autriche, que vous pouvez regarder comme tout-à-fait impuissante sous le rapport politique et moral, et que, grâce à la division des pouvoirs dans son intérieur, grâce au caractère excessivement méticuleux et indécis de l'Empereur, et enfin à l'incapacité la plus complète de M. Andrassy, est absolument incapable d'un mouvement spontané et indépendant.

L'Autriche se cramponne même après cette opinion qui, du reste, est en effet la seule qui lui promet, si elle se vérifie, de la débarrasser de toute immixtion dans les affaires d'Orient. En renonçant à tous les avantages dont pourrait être couronné son action, elle se résigne en même temps à subir tous les désavantages politiques qui résulteront d'un arrangement de la question d'Orient pour elle, pourvu qu'elle ne fût obligée à intervenir.

Aussi est-on ici de bonne humeur depuis la semaine passée, étant presque convaincu qu'on ne sera pas obligé de mouvoir un soldat. La seule chose que M. Andressy fait, c'est de faire crier par tous ses journaux que les conditions définitives de la paix ne peuvent et ne doivent être réglées que par un Congrès Européen.

J'étais hier à Baden, où j'ai rencontré dans le Parc de la Weilburg un de nos Archiducs des plus importants, qui depuis 1866 m'honore de sa confiance. Nous avons longuement parlé de la situation actuelle, qu'il m'a définie presque verbalement comme je vous l'ai caractérisé ci-dessus, et puis il m'a dit ceci: "Nous avons négligé et manqué toutes les occasions dont nous aurions pu nous servir pour prendre une grande position dans la question d'Orient. Je ne crois pas qu'une nouvelle occasion de

cette nature nous revienne encore. Tôt ou tard, la paix sera faite sans nous; mais au grand préjudice de nos intérêts Slaves. L'on ne s'apperceva pas de suite, parceque ces préjudices ne ressortiront qu'en trois ou quatre années, peut-être même plus tard encore. En attendant nous passerons un nouvel arrangement avec la Hongrie, qui sera encore plus difficile à supporter que celui de 1867, et qui nous frayera probablement le chemin à notre ruine économique. La ruine économique sera suivie de la ruine politique; car c'est le sort des Etats en décadence; mais rassurons-nous, à cette époque nous ne vivrons plus." C'est une énonciation qui, vu la position de celui qui l'a faite, dépeint mieux l'esprit qui gouverne l'Autriche que toutes les informations.

D'un autre côté, dans d'autres sphères politiques qui ont, ou du moins peuvent avoir connaissance des pensées intimes de la Russie, l'on croit que la Russie ne manifeste des sentiments pacifiques que pour endormir les Puissances: après avoir conquis la Bulgarie, elle se redressera et commencera parler d'un autre ton. En voyant la grande condescendance des Grandes Puissances, voir même leur passivité vis-à-vis de ce qu'elle fait, elle redoublera ses prétentions. Pour qui connaît l'histoire, ces suppositions ont beaucoup de probabilité. L'avidité de la Russie est insatiable, et son ambition est sans bornes. Il y a des hommes dont le premier mouvement est le mensonge; pour qui connaît la Russie, sait bien qu'elle ne connaît d'autres mouvements, car tous ses mouvements ne portent que du mensonge, et ne tendent qu'à la fraude, à la rapine et au vol. Donc de sa part tout est possible. Cependant, dans ses journaux que je lis assez attentivement, du moins jusqu'à présent, l'on voit au contraire une certaine lassitude et la tendance bien marquée de ne convoiter pour le moment que la suprématie sur les Slavs Turcs, quelques acquisitions territoriales en Asie et quelques avantages sur la Mer Noire. Tous les raisonnements, du reste, au sujet des prétentions de la Russie sont encore prématurés; il est évident que ces prétentions dépendent de l'issue de la guerre. Mais ce que je puis affirmer de sources très authentiques, c'est qu'au quartier-général Russe l'on ne se fait pas de grandes expectations à l'endroit des victoires à remporter sur le Danube. L'on y voit bien clair que l'armée qui est ramassée en Roumanie est encore insuffisante, car il n'y a plus que 150,000 à 160,000 combattants, et ceux-ci encore sont rongés par l'esprit de conspiration et décimés par des maladies. Un officier Russe, qui est arrivé hier de Bukarest, m'a dit ceci: "Cette campagne-là sera bien difficile. Nos soldats en ont le pressentiment, ce qui n'est pas bon. Mais nous n'avons qu'à avancer en Asia et rester au bord du Danube pour fatiguer la Turquie jusqu'au point d'accepter nos conditions de la paix."

Je crois vous avoir déjà fait mention dans ma dernière lettre de ce que l'Empereur Alexandre n'a abandonné St. Pétersbourg que parce que la police y a découvert une conspiration. Maintenant, j'ai tous les détails sur cette conspiration. Elle est tellement vaste qu'elle couvre tout le pays de ces filets, et elle a choisi cent d'entre ses affiliés qui se sont obligés à effectuer tous les ordres de leur direction sous peine de mort. Un affilié de cette centaine aurait été découvert à la Cour de St. Pétersbourg, et un autre dans l'entourage du Grand Duc Nicholas. C'est ce qui a déterminé l'Empereur à partir au camp et à emporter avec lui toute sa Chancellerie et douze régiments de cavalerie de garde. Avant de partir, il a fait expédier trois convois de la Cour par trois différentes lignes de chemin de fer, dont l'un a traversé la Galicie par Cracovie, et l'autre par Brody, pour que son public ne sache pas dans lequel il se trouve personnellement. Avant de partir aussi, il a donné ordre de réorganiser le Conseil d'Etat, et de l'augmenter de deux délégués de chaque département ou gouvernement. Son but est de donner à ce Conseil l'apparence d'une Chambre quasi-constitutionnelle. Cette mesure est passablement ridicule, parce que ce n'est pas cela que lui demanderont les libéraux de ses pays, lorsque la paix conclue ou une défaite de son armée délieront leurs langues, paralysées maintenant par le danger dans lequel se trouve leur patrie par suite de la guerre. Cependant, malgré toutes les conspirations, je ne crois pas, tant que la guerre dure, à un soulèvement révolutionnaire en Russie.

En Pologne, la même situation qu'il y a huit jours. La polémique entre les journaux a cessé, mais personne, même les plus enthousiastes, ne pense à commencer un mouvement national, sans y être invité par la Turquie.

Un soulèvement en Pologne, je le crois impossible, à l'exception dans le cas d'une défaite éclatante de la Russie. Mais, comme j'ai eu déjà l'honneur de vous écrire et d'indiquer les moyens, rien de plus facile que d'y provoquer un mouvement national contre la Russie et pour la Turquie. Un mouvement pareil, suivi des manifestations publiques, aurait, d'après mon avis, une grande importance politique au préjudice de la Russie et au profit de la Turquie, dans tous les cas et quoi qu'il arrive. Car pendant la guerre il diminuerait de beaucoup la suffisance et le courage de la Russie, et même pendant les négociations de la paix il exercerait son influence sur la Russie qui, en ce

cas, se trouverait obligée à ne pas trop marchander pour pouvoir si tôt que possible faire rentrer son armée dans le pays. Cette manière de juger la valeur d'un mouvement national en Pologne pour la Turquie est trop juste au premier coup d'œil pour avoir besoin d'être prouvée. Mais comme je viens de le dire plus haut, la Pologne ne sortira pas de sa réserve actuelle, sans avoir obtenu un signe de vie de Constantinople et sans être travaillée par les journaux et par des émissaires à envoyer dans le pays.

Je vous prie, &c.

P.S.—M. Wassilczikow, Conseiller de Légation, qui remplace provisoirement M. Novikow, est devenu fou.

No. 525.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 631. Most Confidential.)

Therapia, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 612, Most Confidential, of the 13th instant, I stated, in answer to your Lordship's telegram of the previous day, some of the grounds upon which, in my opinion, the Porte would not consent to the terms of peace which Russia was prepared to offer before her armies had crossed the Balkans.

I have since received your Lordship's telegram of the 14th instant, in which your Lordship informs me that Prince Gortchakow had telegraphed to Count Schouvaloff that Bulgaria could not be divided into two provinces, as such an arrangement would exclude from autonomous institutions the most industrious and intelligent part of the population, and that which had suffered most from Turkish misrule. The Russian Chancellor thus appears to demand the formation into one vassal autonomous province of the whole of Turkey in Europe inhabited by Bulgarians. The limits to be assigned to this province can only be, at present, matter of conjecture, but they might be made to include the Vilayet of Adrianople and that of Salonica down to the Ægean Sea.

If there are good reasons for believing that Turkey would not accept the terms of peace as first proposed by Prince Gortchakow, except after defeats and disasters which would leave her at the absolute mercy of her enemy, there are still stronger grounds for the conviction that nothing but the extremest necessity would induce her to listen to the further condition now suggested.

The formation of the provinces north and south of the Balkans into one vassal autonomous province with the withdrawal from them of the Turkish troops and functionaries, and the abandonment and destruction of the Turkish fortresses on the Danube, would be, in fact, the end of the Ottoman Empire in Europe. It would take but a little time to convert this so-called "vassal autonomous province" into a semi-independent Principality or State. Its complete severance from Turkey would then be but a question of a few years.

Like Servia and Roumania it would become a mere dependency of Russia, to be annexed when necessary or convenient.

With the creation of this "vassal autonomous Province" the remainder of the territories of Turkey in Europe must be lost to her. Bosnia and Herzegovina would be completely cut off from Constantinople both by sea and by land, unless, which is altogether improbable, a right of way would be left for Turkish troops through the new Bulgaria. These two provinces would either be formed into another vassal autonomous State, or would be divided between Austria, Servia, and Montenegro, as Prince Gortchakow evidently foreshadows.

Greece will be compelled to demand the annexation of Thessaly and Epirus, and will, no doubt, make a desperate struggle to obtain at least such part of Macedonia as would prevent her being altogether cut off from Constantinople, to the ultimate acquisition of which the hopes of the whole Hellenic race are directed. It may be presumed that she would have the support of Europe in her claim to Thessaly and Epirus. But Russia has been working for many years to bring the whole of Macedonia, and especially Mount Athos, within the boundaries of Slavism. She would, probably, therefore, resist all attempts on the part of Greece to acquire territory so necessary to the development of the Slave race to the south, and without which the new Russo-Bulgarian Principality would be deprived of access to the Mediterranean.

The policy of Russia with regard to Greece has, of late years, been altogether changed, and the Greeks know full well that they have been abandoned by her for the more abject and useful Slaves. The Encyclical recently issued by the Greek Patriarch, of which I have sent your Lordship a copy, is a sufficient proof of the present feelings of the Greeks towards Russia.

To complete the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire, Italy would probably lose no time in putting in a claim to Albania as a counterpoise to the increase of territory given to Austria out of Bosnia. She is already meditating and preparing for this step.

What would remain to the Sultan but Constantinople and a part of ancient Thrace? How long could he hope to retain even this fragment of his European Empire with the Danube, the Balkans, Varna, and every port in the Black and Ægean Seas in the hands of his irresistible enemy?

Could Turkey believe that any conditions or Treaties, however solemn or stringent, imposed by Europe upon the new vassal autonomous provinces, would be observed? She has learnt by experience how far such engagements, whatever may be their character or their guarantees, are respected by such semi-independent States themselves, and by Russia and by Europe, whenever it is to the interest of either to override them. Whilst she has been held to the strict observance of her Treaty obligations to her vassal States, they have been allowed to violate theirs with impunity. She has been made to feel that Christendom in dealing with her knows no equity nor law. Servia, treated by her with rare moderation and generosity after a disastrous defeat, takes the first opportunity to throw over a Treaty entered into a few months before, and sends her Prince to the Emperor of Russia, at war with her Suzerain, to ask leave to join in it, and to visit Prince Charles, who is in open rebellion to the Sultan. Roumania, after having secretly entered into a Convention with Russia against Turkey, with cynical audacity accuses her of aggressive designs on the Principality, and declares her independence in the teeth of European Treaties and of her Conventions with the Porte.

With this experience of the past, could Turkey agree, except when utterly prostrate at the feet of Russia, to such terms as are now proposed by Prince Gortchakow?

We should entertain no illusion on this, to us, vital subject. If Turkey were to accept even such conditions as are proposed by Russia before she has gained any decisive or signal success, the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire would have begun and the European territories of the Sultan would be partitioned, as were those of Poland. It is scarcely to be believed that, under such circumstances, Egypt would long continue to recognize the Sultan's suzerainty. Tunis and Tripoli would be unable to maintain even a nominal independence. There are Powers looking to them, also, for increase of territory and of influence in the Mediterranean. Means would soon be found to detach Syria from what was left of the Ottoman Empire, and the Pashalic of Bagdad, with the valleys of the Euphrates and Tigris, would virtually belong to Russia, the mistress of Armenia.

All that would remain to the Sultan would be the western provinces of Asia Minor, and, with Russia as his neighbour, it may be foreseen that even this fragment would not long be left to him.

This great disruption of the Ottoman Empire, with the vast changes that it must inevitably bring about in the condition and relative strength of the Great European Powers, may be, as some think, of advantage to the cause of Christianity and civilization, notwithstanding the wars, desolation, and misery to which it must give rise; but it must be looked in the face. If England is prepared to renounce her Imperial position and interests, she has only to allow Russia to have her way, and to dictate her own terms to the Porte. This new English policy will then be successfully inaugurated, but there can be no retreat from it hereafter. The objects and ends of Russia in the present war against Turkey are no longer a matter of doubt or speculation. They are avowed in Prince Gortchakow's conditions of peace, offered when it is almost a moral certainty that the Porte would not, and could not, accept them, and with the threat that more will be asked should they be rejected before the Russian armies cross the Balkans. What that more would be it is not difficult to conjecture. There remains but the command of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles, and the annexation of Armenia. Russia would then have the control of the alternative routes to India through Asia and by the Suez Canal. We could only keep open the latter by annexing Egypt or by permanently maintaining a large naval force in the eastern corner of the Mediterranean.

In my reply to your Lordship's telegram informing me that it was desirable that

nothing should be said to the Porte as to the Russian conditions of peace, I stated that in my opinion it would be even dangerous to hint at them to the Turkish Government. In my hastily-written despatch of the 13th instant I gave some of the reasons why I apprehended danger should the Porte suspect that Russia, with the support of Europe, and especially of England, was determined to impose such terms upon Turkey. I need scarcely repeat them here, although they were not perhaps placed before your Lordship with all the clearness and fulness that the vast importance of the subject demands. What we have to fear is the effect upon the Sultan, his Ministers, his Government, and his people, of telling them, or even of leading them to believe, that they were about to be driven out of Europe, for in such and in no other light would they view Prince Gortchakow's terms. They would in all probability be thrown into a state of reckless despair. At any rate it would be more prudent on every account to wait, before attempting to impose such conditions of peace upon Turkey, until the Russian armies are in possession of, at least, the Bulgarian Province north of the Balkans, and able to afford some protection to the lives and property of some of those Christians for whose sake Russia alleges that she has entered upon this most calamitous war.

But I would venture to urge most earnestly upon Her Majesty's Government not to be the medium of communicating, or of suggesting, any such terms as those proposed by Prince Gortchakow to the Sultan or to the Porte. It would no doubt suit the purpose of Russia to make use of England to impose them upon Turkey.

The Russian Chancellor's language does not admit the possibility of a mediation, in which England could play a useful or honourable part. It is simply that of dictation. The terms offered are to be accepted at once, or the consequences will be a further dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. England, if she fell into the trap laid for her, would appear as the abettor of Russia in her designs, not as the mediator between her and her victim. Let some other Power, Germany or Austria, accept this task. It is vital to our gravest interests, to interests the importance of which no words can adequately describe, much less exaggerate, that we should be ready to interpose to save the Turkish Empire from complete dissolution. If we have even determined to abandon it to its fate we have not determined to abandon to the same fate the highest interests of the British Empire.

Surely the policy, which has hitherto made us support Turkey for our own purposes and safety, and for no abstract love of Turks or their faith, a policy approved and adopted by the greatest statesman that England has produced, is not one which the events of the last few months, having no relation whatever to it, are sufficient to reverse. That policy was partly based upon the belief that Turkey is a barrier to the ambitious designs of Russia in the East, and that the Sultan, the acknowledged head of the Mahommedan faith, is a useful, if not necessary, ally to England, who has millions of Mussulmans amongst her subjects. He may be deprived of his Empire, and may be reduced to the condition of a fifth-rate Asiatic Potentate, but he will still be the Caliph of Islam, and the Mussulman world, in a struggle for very existence, may turn upon England as the principal cause of the danger that threatens it. Some persons, not without authority, are, I am aware, disposed to treat this consideration lightly, but I am persuaded, from what I see passing around me, and from what I have learnt, that it is one which we ought seriously to bear in mind.

It is scarcely necessary to dwell, in this place, upon the result of the breaking up and partition of the Ottoman Empire on the balance of power, or upon the great danger to liberty and civilization of the establishment of a vast military Slav Empire in the East of Europe.

If Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that there is nothing to be done to oppose the designs of Russia, we should, at least, be prepared to mediate when the time comes. In order to be in a position to do so, we should make Turkey feel that although, as we have warned her, she cannot expect any help from us in her struggle with Russia, we shall be ready, at a favourable moment, to do our best to see that she be treated with justice and moderation, and her Mahommedan and Christian subjects alike with impartiality and equal humanity. It has been my object to raise such hopes, as I have none others to give, without committing in any way Her Majesty's Government, whose views and policy it is my duty to consider and carry out. It is the only course left to us, if we are not prepared to give Turkey even such indirect aid as the preservation and maintenance of our own national and Imperial interests may render necessary. By following it we may recover and maintain a part of that great and preponderating influence,—I hesitate to use a word which has been so indignantly denounced as "prestige,"—which England once enjoyed amongst the

Mussulman, and even Christian, nations and communities of the East, and which she was able to use most effectively for their good and her own.

I have considered it my duty to place these considerations thus frankly before Her Majesty's Government. It appears to me that England has one of three courses to pursue,—either to prevent the accomplishment of the designs of Russia by decisive measures; or by holding at once such language to her as will make her understand that we are prepared to prevent, if possible, the destruction and partition of the Ottoman Empire; or to let matters take their course until a favourable moment comes for stepping in as an impartial mediator prepared to save Turkey from too onerous and fatal terms, or to fold our arms and do nothing, leaving everything to chance.

I will not add the other alternative, that of proposing terms to Turkey which would cause her the utmost indignation, resentment, and despair, and which would only confirm the distrust and suspicion she has already been led by the successful intrigues of Russia to feel of England.

There is a party in Turkey favourable to peace. I believe that the Sultan might be induced to make considerable sacrifices to put an end to a destructive and cruel war. But when I wrote my despatch of May 30 to your Lordship, suggesting that the present relative position of the belligerents might afford an occasion for mediation, I could scarcely have foreseen, after all the assurances of moderation and disinterestedness which Russia had given, that she would insist, even before she had achieved a single success, except the capture of a small Turkish town (Ardahan), upon such terms as those proposed by Prince Gortchakow, as the *sine qua non* terms, which, when impartially examined by the light of past history and events, can only be intended to lead to the partition of Turkey in Europe, and the speedy dissolution of the Ottoman Empire.

In the foregoing remarks I have not touched upon the enormous difficulties of forming one vassal autonomous province out of the districts inhabited by Bulgarians to the north and south of the Balkans, of finding a Governor for it, who, it is to be presumed, is to be a Christian, and not necessarily a Turkish subject, of dealing with the Mussulman populations that are to be placed under him, and of devising a scheme of administration that will provide for the security of the property, and for the religious freedom of Mahommedans. In these questions alone there are the seeds of inevitable discord, wars, and, may be, massacres. They alone may afford pretexts for future interference, total independence, and ultimate annexation.

It must be remembered that the new Bulgarian vassal province, with its large Mussulman population, will be very different from Roumania and Servia when they received their semi-independence. The former had no Mahommedans to embarrass her; the latter soon disposed of the few she had to deal with.

I have referred in this despatch to that branch of the subject which is more immediately connected with larger matters, and with the Imperial interests of England. The other branch is, however, scarcely of less importance, and I may venture to trouble your Lordship with some observations upon it hereafter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 526.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 28.*)

(No. 632. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 19, 1877.*

I HAVE received many visits from dignitaries of the Greek Church and from some of the principal Greek inhabitants of Constantinople. One of their objects in coming to me has been to ask what England would be prepared to do for the Greeks should the present war lead to the fall and dismemberment of the Turkish Empire, and to seek my advice as to the course to be pursued under present circumstances by the Greek subjects of the Sultan and by the Hellenes. Yesterday I had a very long and interesting conversation on these topics with the Bishop of Therapia, a prelate of intelligence and influence, and a leading member of the Synod.

The views expressed by those who have thus sought me are to the following effect:—The Greeks of Turkey are not indisposed to remain subjects of the Sultan if they could be secured good and just treatment. They look forward, undoubtedly, to

future emancipation from Turkish rule, and to the extension of a Greek kingdom to Constantinople. But, in the meanwhile, they would be content to have their share in the Government of the Empire, and they believe that the increasing influence which they possess in the direction of public affairs—some of the most important posts in the Administration being held by them—will assure them this influence. On the other hand, they think, with the Hellenes, that they were passed over at the Conferences; that their just claims and representations were not listened to; and that Russia and the other Powers have abandoned them, and sacrificed them to the Slavs. They fear, therefore, that nothing will be done for them should Russia succeed in the present war against Turkey and dictate terms of peace, but that the Slavs will obtain exceptional rights and privileges, and that an extension will be given to Bulgaria which will be fatal to the hopes and aspirations of the Greek race. From the fear that this should happen, the Hellenes are prepared to invade Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia, and to raise those provinces, and the Greek subjects of Turkey would be ready to aid and join them in so doing as soon as Russia has advanced to the Balkans. Neither the Hellenic Government nor the leading Greeks of Constantinople make any secret of these intentions.

Under these circumstances what, I am asked, would Her Majesty's Government be prepared to do? Would they interfere to secure to Greece the annexation of Thessaly, Epirus, and the whole or part of Macedonia, in the event of Russia occupying Bulgaria? Or if the Hellenes, acting as they have hitherto done upon the advice of England, were to remain quiet, and abstain from invading and attacking Turkey, and exciting her Greek populations to revolt, would she undertake that any privileges and rights granted to the Slavs, and that any guarantees obtained for the future good government of Bulgarians, would be extended to the Greek subjects of the Sultan; and that neither Russia nor the Porte should make any territorial changes or arrangements that would interfere with the development and future of the Hellenic race? If England could give such an undertaking the Greeks, my questioners say, might be induced to abstain from taking advantage of the present war against Turkey; they might, indeed, be disposed to give her their sympathy or help in it.

I was unable, of course, to tell those who questioned me what Her Majesty's Government might be disposed to do in the case they mentioned; but I urged them to use their influence to prevent their countrymen from adding to the dangers to which the peace of Europe is already exposed, and to the difficulties of the Powers, by bringing about fresh insurrections in Turkey. I pointed out to them that any such insurrections would only strengthen the hands of an enemy that the Greeks declare they fear far more than the Turk; and that if, by causing a rising in the provinces of Thessaly, Epirus, and Macedonia, they compel the Porte to send troops to put it down, they weaken the forces that it can oppose to the Russians on the Danube or elsewhere.

I have reminded them that, by following the advice of England, and abstaining from attacks upon Turkey, and by developing her resources and educating her people, Greece has gained the sympathy of England, of which she has already received a striking proof in the cession to her of the Ionian Islands.

If, departing from the course that she had of late years pursued, Greece were to invade Turkey, and thus to cause serious embarrassments to Europe, and to counteract the policy which England may consider it necessary for her interests to adopt in the Turkish question, I could not answer for the consequences.

I fear that these and similar arguments to dissuade the Greeks from taking advantage of the present war to attack Turkey would have little weight unless Her Majesty's Government were prepared to use very decided language at Athens, if the Greek Government, under the pressure of a popular outcry, were to meditate an attack upon Turkey.

I have always been of opinion that the Hellenic race might be a check to the advance of the Slave wave, which, under the guidance of Russia, threatens to overwhelm the greater part of Turkey in Europe. It is to the interest of the Porte, and to that of England, and of some other Powers, that the Greeks should be so used. I have endeavoured to point out to the Turkish Ministers, in friendly conversations on the subject, that their best policy is to conciliate and encourage the Greeks. If Turkey is to break up, it would be to the advantage of Europe, and perhaps of liberty and civilization, to have a people opposed to the Slavs, and to the ambition of Russia, to take the place of the Turks in the southern part of Turkey in Europe, and on the sea-board of the Ægean. Sensible and farseeing Greeks fully understand this, and would prevent their countrymen from compromising their future by imprudent and

dangerous adventures, which would put Europe, and especially England, against them. They are, therefore, ready to advise them to bide their time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 527.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 633.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 19, 1877.*

SAFVET PASHA observed to me a few days ago that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador had addressed a note to the Porte of a very disagreeable nature. I asked his Excellency to give me some more information about it. He merely replied that its terms were very peremptory and hostile to Turkey, and that he saw in it the first step towards an attempt to deprive her of her fortress on the Danube, and of that river as the main line of defence of the Empire. Karatheodori Effendi, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, subsequently gave me a fuller account of its substance, which I telegraphed to your Lordship yesterday, and promised to let me have a copy of it, which he has not yet been able to do, as it extends, he informs me, to thirty-six pages.

I have no doubt that Count Zichy's note is partly founded on the despatch addressed to him by Count Andrassy on the 22nd ultimo, copy of which was inclosed in your Lordship's No. 177 of the 7th instant. I cannot, therefore, understand why the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador should not have told me that he had sent this note in, although I have endeavoured to ascertain from him the nature of the communication he had made to the Porte.

Mr. Sandison is under the impression, from what he has learnt at the Porte, that there is a further despatch from Count Andrassy, to which Count Zichy's note also refers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 528.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 636. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 19, 1877.*

I AM informed that the Greek Consul-General at Constantinople has recently released some notoriously bad characters who were in the Greek prison there, condemned for various crimes, and has sent them to Greece with other dangerous men, who have been collected from the scum of the Greek population in the city. I am assured that they are to be employed in committing acts of aggression and outrages on the Turkish frontiers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 529.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 637.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 19, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose a translation in French of a Proclamation addressed to the Bulgarians, which, I am informed, has been widely distributed in the Balkan provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 529.

Proclamation to the Bulgarian Nation.

Frères!

LA nation qui sait combattre et verser son sang pour sa liberté et l'indépendance peut être sûre de son succès. On n'acquiert la liberté qu'avec de grands sacrifices. Dans le cours des siècles pendant lesquels nous gémissons sous le joug de l'esclavage nous nous sommes soulevés souvent contre notre ennemi mortel, mais chaque fois les hordes Turques étouffaient notre cri dans le sang et nous supportions des martyres qui poussaient tout le monde à la compassion. Nos villages ont été récemment encore la proie des flammes, nos mères, nos femmes, et nos filles ont été déshonorées et maltraitées, nos prêtres ont été crucifiés, nos églises ont été pillées, les chiens rongeaient les cadavres de milliers de Bulgares et plusieurs milliers de Bulgares n'ont pas même trouver de tombeau. De quelque côté qu'on regarde on voit les plaines et les champs de notre malheureuse patrie arrosé du sang Bulgare. Nous avons patiemment supporté les peines cruelles de ces malheurs dans l'espoir d'une prompte délivrance. Nos espérances ont été réalisées. La Russie vint nous sauver. Elle se prépare à demander compte de notre sang versé et venger nos souffrances. L'étendard glorieux Russe, sous lequel nous allons voir un meilleur avenir, flottera dans la Bulgarie dans un temps rapproché. Les Russes viennent à nous comme des frères qui veulent nous secourir sans demander quoi que ce soit pour eux-mêmes. Les Russes qui ont obtenu une libre existence pour les Roumains, les Serbes, et aux Grecs veulent obtenir la même chose pour nous.

Frères! la grande heure, l'heure sacrée a sonné où nous tous nous devons-nous soulever comme un seul homme pour combattre à côté des Russes. Armez-vous vite et comme vous le pouvez, nous devons nous montrer dignes du sort qu'on nous destine, nos intérêts, notre avenir, et notre délivrance exigent que nous prenions part à la guerre à côté de nos sauveurs. Faisons un grand effort et nous serons dignes de la liberté.

Peuple Bulgare tu vas le donner toi-même un Gouvernement. En attendant obéis au Gouvernement provisoire qui a été nommé par des patriotes. Le Gouvernement va bientôt paraître au milieu de vous et agir après votre volonté. En attendant il vous appelle au sol Roumain. En avant Bulgares, Dieu est avec nous et les frères Russes sont à nous.

Donné en Roumanie le 7 Mai, 1877.

(Signé) K. ZANKOFF.
D. PANOFF.
P. ENTSCHOFF.
D. IVANOFF.
WIFFSKOFSKI.
B. SLANTOLOFF.
WASSOF.

No. 530.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 638.)

Therapia, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Cockatrice," giving an account of the recent attack on the Turkish iron-clad squadron off Sulina by Russian torpedo-boats.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 530.

Commander Musgrave to Mr. Layard.

"Cockatrice," at Sulina, June 12, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report, for the information of your Excellency, that, at 2 A.M. of the 10th instant, the Turkish iron-clad squadron, consisting of the ships "Mukhandenkhair," "Fethi-Bolend," and "Idlatieh," at anchor off the entrance of this port, were attacked by torpedo-launches which were repulsed. One succeeded in placing her torpedo in contact with the bow of the "Idlatieh," doing, however, little or no damage, it apparently having been insufficiently submerged, and exploded at the forward part of the vessel; the launch was immediately afterwards sunk.

The fleet weighed or slipped their cables and proceeded in chase, keeping up a heavy fire of great guns and small arms, and lay claim to having sunk a second launch; but the night was very dark and the information very unreliable and contradictory.

The officer and four of the crew of the launch sunk alongside the "Idlatieh" were picked up, and I hear the purport of their statements is that the Russian steamer "Constantine" left Sebastopol the day before with four common steam-launches in tow, and picking up off Odessa two Thorneycroft torpedo-boats. One of these was the one sunk.

100 Circassians were brought here in a gun-boat from Toultcha on the 8th instant, and sent over to the villages of Lete (Russian), Tutonova (Roumanian), and Ismailia (German), the inhabitants of which fled at their approach, either to the Russians at Vilcovi, or took refuge in the reeds; in the meantime the villages were pillaged and all the cattle lifted. Another 100 arrived on the 10th, but proving insubordinate were sent back yesterday morning by order of the Caimacam. The first lot have, however, encamped themselves on the north bank of the river above the town, refusing to return the cattle stolen, or to go back to Toultcha, and most probably will be a source of great annoyance being under no discipline and neither respectors of persons nor property.

By whose actual order or demand these men were sent here I can get no reliable information.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. MUSGRAVE.

No. 531.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 640.)

Therapia, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a communication which I have received from the Porte, giving the result of the inquiries instituted by the Vali of Bosnia into the alleged outrage committed by Turks on a Greek bridal procession in the district of Banjaluka, which was referred to in some of the English newspapers, and reported on by Mr. Vice-Consul Freeman in his despatch of May 15.

It is satisfactory to find that whenever representations are made by Her Majesty's Embassy on such matters to the Porte immediate steps are taken to inquire into them, whatever may be the result; the fact of their being made acts a wholesome check on the local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 531.

Note-Verbale.

Sublime Porte (no date.)

LE Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet de Bosnie transmet à la Sublime Porte les informations recueillies par les autorités de Banjaluka au sujet du prétendu assassinat commis sur les convives d'une noce Grecque.

Voici en quoi consistent ces informations:—

A Gradiska il n'y a eu aucun méfait de cette nature. Seulement il y a plus de deux mois le Major Nadir Bey, dans une rencontre à Selnich, a tué quatre insurgés, délivré de leurs mains la fille d'Alichik Boyo, du village Tchardadjan (Banjaluka) qu'ils avaient enlevée de force et l'a remise à son père. Un autre incident présente une analogie plus frappante avec le fait rapporté à l'Ambassade Royale. C'est celui qui s'est passé à Derbend le jour du mariage de la nommée Astané, fille de Grahovatz Meiter de Lichke, avec Yacof, fils de Makik Nado de Leebnik. Le fameux insurgé Karanbachi Yovitcha, du village de Podnola, et ses compagnons Tchernogoratch Bayo

et son frère Risto, du village Povielnie, ont emmené la jeune fille chez Bayo. Là, après s'être livrés à de fortes libations, ils allaient la reconduire chez son fiancé lorsque Yovitcha s'est opposé au départ d'Astané et a affiché son désir d'avoir ses prémices.

Les compagnons y ayant mis obstacles une altercation s'en est suivie. Bayo et Ristof ont tué Yovitcha et conduit la fille chez son fiancé. Nado, le père de Yacof, se trouve à l'heure qu'il est avec les insurgés. Yacof est en Autriche et sa femme chez elle. Quant à Bayo et Ristof, ils ont perdu la vie dans une rencontre avec les troupes auxiliaires.

Telles sont, en substance, les informations fournies par le Gouverneur de Banjaluka.

Les autorités Impériales se lèvent contre des imputations aussi mensongères que malveillantes et font observer que les organes Slavophiles n'intervertissent les rôles que pour donner le change à l'opinion publique et faire accroire à l'Europe que les populations Chrétiennes sont exposées en Turquie à des procédés vexatoires et arbitraires.

Les Consuls d'Angleterre à Serajevo et à Mostar ont d'ailleurs effectué de leur côté une enquête dont le résultat a démontré qu'aucun incident de cette nature n'a eu lieu à Glomoutch ni ailleurs et que la meilleure intelligence et la plus parfaite harmonie continuent à régner entre les populations Musulmanes et Chrétiennes.

No. 532.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 28.*)

(No. 641.) *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose copies of despatches from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Prevesa, reporting on the state of affairs in Epirus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 532.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Jocelyn.

(Confidential.) *Prevesa, June 9, 1877.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that Mr. Kypriotis, writing confidentially under date of the 1st instant, states that the Sulliotte Chiefs who, with a certain amount of reserve, had agreed to the plan disclosed to them by the revolutionary society at Janina, had despatched a confidential messenger to Greece, to ascertain whether their friends and relations in that country were cognizant of the above plan, and whether they approved of such an undertaking. The above messenger having returned to Janina a few days ago with a reply in the affirmative, the Sulliotes are now preparing for the event. As to the military authorities at Janina, Mr. Kypriotis states that, being aware of the military preparations that are being made in Greece, and suspecting also the loyalty of the inhabitants of the mountain regions, they will not move the battalions which are concentrated at Avlona, and that they intend to occupy all the most advantageous posts in the suspected districts, and especially those at Laren and Sulli, so as to be in a position to thwart the consummation of the above plan of revolt. Notice has also been given by the military authorities to all the influential Beys and Agas in Albania to keep themselves in readiness to rush with all their people to any place where an insurrectionary movement should show itself. Mr. Kypriotis also adds, as regards the character of these Beys and Agas, that some of them would have no scruple whatever to commit crimes similar to those perpetrated by the Circassians in Bulgaria.

Before concluding this despatch I think it my duty to mention that it has been my opinion all along (and this I have frequently communicated in a private way to Mr. Consul Blunt) that no attempt at insurrection will even be made in Epirus unless it is with the consent and support of the Greek Government; so that if the information supplied by Mr. Kypriotis is correct, and has, moreover, any connection with the military preparations that are now being actively carried on in Greece, I very much fear that the standard of revolt will be raised eventually in these parts, and, as far as I am able to judge, with not a small hope for success too, as the Turkish troops in Epirus will have to contend against superior numbers; and in view of what I state above, and which might take place at no distant date perhaps, I venture to suggest the occasional visit at the several ports along the coast of Epirus of a British ship-of-war, as I doubt not that such a measure would have a very salutary effect on all concerned.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 532.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Mr. Jocelyn.

Sir, *Prevesa, June 2, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that from Monday last the shops began gradually to open, and notice having been given yesterday to the shopkeepers that they are once more at liberty to fix for themselves the price of their own goods, our market has assumed its former aspect. The 100 piastre "kaimé," however, is henceforth to be calculated at 130 in copper.

I avail myself of this opportunity to report also that the exportation of horses, mules, and oxen has been prohibited.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

No. 533.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June 28.*)

(No. 642.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Sulina reporting the state of affairs at that place.

I have, &c.

(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 533.

Vice-Consul Stokes to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Sulina, June 3, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour of acknowledging the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 25th ultimo, and also of your telegram of the 31st ultimo. All is quiet and tranquil here. On the 28th ultimo I visited Tultcha. In the town matters were quiet, but it was currently reported that at the villages in the neighbourhood robberies were of daily occurrence and occasionally murders committed, and from the inquiries made respecting these matters I am convinced that the reports are correct, and am of opinion that, although the Ottoman authorities are willing to punish the offenders, they have not the power to do so. The Ottoman authorities have stopped all communication between this place and Tultcha and also all communication on the opposite bank of the river, therefore, provisions are becoming very scarce and dear. Her Majesty's ship "Rapid" visited the port on the 30th ultimo, and returned to Kustendji on the following day. Three Turkish ironclads remain at anchor in the roads, and one ironclad and a corvette have come into the harbour. Admiral Hobart Pasha left this yesterday, I believe, for Kustendji. The "Cockatrice" leaves to-morrow for gun practice, and will probably call at Kustendji prior to her return here.

I have, &c.

(Signed) O. STOKES.

No. 534.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 643.) *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

My Lord,

THE time having expired for the Sessions of the Turkish Chambers, they have been prorogued. Their last sittings, when the Budget was submitted to them, were very stormy. On Thursday last they positively refused to sanction the Budget unless very considerable reductions were made in it, or to authorize the Government to raise a forced loan, unless it consented to make them. Most of the Ministers were present during the debate, and were subjected to the most severe cross-examination and attacks both from Mussulman and Christian Members. One Mahommedan Deputy declared that they were deceiving the Sultan, the Chambers, and the country, and that he and his colleagues would insist that the expenditure should be more in accordance with the financial conditions of the Empire. The Ministers objected that, under present circumstances, it was utterly impossible to reduce the votes for the army and the navy; but that this should be done as soon as the war was over. Then, said the Deputies, they must reduce the civil list, and their own salaries and those of the high functionaries of the State and of the innumerable pensioners who lived upon the public purse.

The attitude of the Chamber was so menacing that at one moment the Ministers hesitated between dissolving it at once, or giving in their resignations to the Sultan. On Friday the President, Ahmed Vefyk Pasha, sought, by personal interviews with the Members, to bring about an understanding with the Government. On Saturday, after a renewed angry debate, the Deputies persisting in their demand for great economies to the public expenditure, the Chamber held a secret Session in which it was decided to refuse the Budget and forced loan altogether, unless the Ministers consented to a reduction in the Budget of about 2,000,000*l.* sterling. To this they were obliged in the end to agree, although declaring that they did not know how it could be effected. The House then authorized the raising of a forced loan amounting to about 4,000,000*l.* sterling.

The complete independence and vigorous freedom of speech shown by the Turkish Parliament is a most remarkable feature, especially as its members were in this instance practically chosen by the Government itself, and were accused of being its docile agents. Unless it be too late to make any effort to reform this country, and to provide for the good government of its various populations, the spirit shown by this first Turkish Parliament might afford good hopes for the future. If there were a Turkish statesman who understood the wants and true condition of his country he might avail himself of it. When the time comes for peace, and the reform of the administration of Turkey for the good of the Christians, we might, I think, make use of it in the interests of humanity and of Europe. When that time arrives, I shall venture to submit my ideas on the subject to Her Majesty's Government, if it be still within my province to do so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

P.S.—Since writing this despatch I have learnt that the sittings of the Chamber have been prolonged for ten days, in order to allow the Government to come to an arrangement with it as to the Budget, which they maintain cannot be reduced.

A. H. L.

No. 535.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 644. Confidential.) *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

My Lord,

A PERSON entirely in the confidence of Safvet Pasha has asked him whether the German Ambassador has made any offer on the part of his Government to mediate between Turkey and Russia, or whether any overtures to that effect have been made secretly at Berlin. His Excellency replied that Prince Reuss had not as yet spoken to him on the subject, but that if Germany were to offer her mediation, and the terms she proposed were acceptable, the Porte would not reject such offer in order to apply by way of preference for the mediation of the British Government.

I am inclined to suspect that, although Prince Reuss may not have made any positive offer of mediation on the part of Germany to the Porte, he is preparing the way for doing so in his communications with Safvet Pasha and the Grand Vizier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 536.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 645.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith the copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt respecting the classification of the Bulgarian prisoners, to whom an amnesty has been granted by the Sultan.

I am still giving my constant attention to this matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure in No. 536.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Adrianople, June 16, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that the Vali has received from Philippopolis the long-expected list of Bulgarian prisoners. It is a mere nominal list, without particulars of the sentence, where any has been pronounced, or of the offence imputed beyond the summary designations of "assassin," "accessory to assassination," "instigator of rebellion," and so forth. His Excellency, in allowing me confidentially to look over it, declined to furnish me with a copy even of this meagre document. The most noticeable feature of the list is that, in conformity with Ali Pasha's instructions, as it appears, each prisoner named in it has already been respectively classed by Abro Effendi and the Mutessarif of Philippopolis under one of the three categories of amnesty decided upon by the Porte. Nor has this treatment been confined to the cases of prisoners at Philippopolis only, but those of prisoners originally tried and condemned by the Extraordinary Commission, and who are now at Adrianople, have been subjected to it.

The list in question contains the names of 121 Bulgarians, and this number comprises all prisoners who are to come under the operation of the amnesty, with the exception of 18 at Sofia, and the 62 at Constantinople.

These 121 persons are assigned as follows to the several categories of amnesty:—

Twenty-six to the first category; that is, full and complete release.

Twenty-two to the second category: permission to return to their native districts, but remaining under police supervision until the end of the war.

Sixty-eight to the third category: removal to parts of the country at a distance from their native places, remaining there under police supervision, and receiving rations from the Government until the end of the war, when all will be definitely liberated.

Five are excepted from the amnesty. These are persons who were under sentence of death. That sentence is to be commuted to residence in a fortress for life (Kalahbend).

Ali Pasha informs me that, among the above 121 prisoners, there are 43 against whom no sentence has been pronounced, owing to the intention of the Government to proclaim an amnesty; and that 39 of the latter number have been convicted as principals or accessories in the murder of Mussulmans. These 39 prisoners have been included in the third category, and the remaining 4 in the second.

It appears that the 26 persons comprised in the first category had all been sentenced to a maximum of three years' imprisonment.

Of the 22 prisoners who come under the second category, 20 had been condemned to five years' hard labour, and the remaining 2 are among those who have not been sentenced.

Of the 68 persons who are assigned to the third category, 25 had been condemned

to hard labour for terms of seven to fifteen years, the remaining 43 being unsentenced as above stated.

Abro Effendi and the Mutesarif of Philippopolis explain, as the reason why they have classed so large a proportion of the prisoners under the third category, that the public peace which the Porte is at the present moment so specially anxious to preserve would be endangered were persons who had been concerned in the death of Mussulmans allowed to return to the places where the crimes had been committed, and where they would be exposed to the vengeance of the relations of the murdered persons.

The Vali spoke to me in approval and support of this view; but, although in principle it appears just and fair enough, I explained to his Excellency that, having been called upon to assist in the matter in an impartial spirit, it was impossible for me to give, blindfold and off-hand, my adherence to a decision which had been arrived at without my having been consulted, and as to whose merits I was for the most part ignorant.

In confirmation of this view, I remarked that there are several cases from Philippopolis which are detailed in the Adrianople list, and which have been classed by Abro Effendi in the second category, but which ought in my opinion to be classed in the first. His Excellency then suggested that either I should proceed to Philippopolis and examine the minutes of the trials, or that he should telegraph for those minutes, which Abro Effendi might bring here himself. In thanking Ali Pasha for this offer, I remarked to his Excellency that had I known that the task of classification would be left to Abro Effendi and the Mutessarif, I should have gone to Philippopolis in good time, and have placed myself in communication with those officials, but that, under present circumstances, either of the courses he had suggested would entail a further delay which was not likely to be compensated by any essential modification of the decision arrived at in my absence.

Under the circumstances above reported it is evident that further discussion of the subject here between the Vali and myself would either be superfluous, or have the effect of retarding, in all probability uselessly, the proclamation of the amnesty. I therefore beg to leave it to your Excellency to decide what further steps are to be taken in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

No. 537.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 646.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 20, 1877.*

THE Porte has received information that the Russian military authorities and troops have committed atrocities on the Mussulman populations, and have slain, without quarter, Circassians in the Turkish service who have fallen into their hands. Thus, at Beutlu Ahmed, in Armenia, it is stated that above 1,000 Circassians were put to death, no quarter having been given to a force of Circassian cavalry that had been surprised during the night. In some villages of Circassia the inhabitants, men, women, and children, are said to have been murdered at the approach of the Turkish troops, many of the women and girls having been previously outraged.

The Porte, I am told, is now about to address a Circular to its Agents abroad, to be communicated to the Governments to which they are accredited, with regard to the proceedings of the Russians at Ardahan after the capture of that town, when between 1,000 and 1,500 of the inhabitants are alleged to have been massacred. I have no means of ascertaining whether the acts, of which the Russians are thus accused, have been committed by them. The active and intelligent correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" at Constantinople, who has, he informs me, trustworthy agents at the seats of war and in Circassia, has been good enough to show me telegrams from them that confirm the statements as to these atrocities.

Consul Zohrab, in his despatch to me No. 77 of the 2nd instant, transmitted to your Lordship, mentions the slaughter of the Circassians at Beutlu Ahmed; and Mr. Consul Rickets' telegram of the 21st May, inclosed in your Lordship's No. 174 of the 7th instant, states that 800 of the inhabitants of Ardahan were murdered by the Lesghi troops under Russian orders, and that a number of bodies are alleged to have been thrown into the River Kur.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

No. 538.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 549.)
My Lord, *Paris, June 27, 1877.*

I HAD last night the honour to receive your Lordship's telegram *en clair* of 5·50 P.M. reciting a telegram dated the 24th instant, in which Mr. Consul Reade had informed you that the fire of the Russian batteries had been turned on the foreign Consulates at Rustchuk; that the British Consulate had been destroyed; and that the French Consulate had narrowly escaped.

I put your Lordship's telegram this morning into the Duc Decazes' hand, and, in execution of the instruction contained in it, asked him what steps the French Government intended to take in the matter.

The Duke answered that he had received a similar telegram from the French Consul at Rustchuk, and that, in reply to it, he had informed the Consul by telegraph that it would be inconsistent with his dignity to quit the place so long as his colleagues remained there.

His Excellency went on to say that he had, moreover, begged Prince Orloff, the Russian Ambassador here, to send a telegram at once to the Russian Commanders on the spot to urge that every care should be taken that the fire of their batteries should be so directed as not to injure the foreign Consulates.

The Duke observed that, according to the best information he had been able to obtain, the Consulates were in full view of the Russian batteries. It was not, therefore, a case in which shells were thrown over the walls of a town, the interior of which was not visible to the besieger, who was thus unable to tell on what buildings they might fall. The Duke trusted, therefore, that the Russians would have no difficulty in avoiding the Consulates in future. Still the rights of belligerents were very large, and it did not seem to him to be clear that any formal protest or remonstrance against what had already occurred would be warranted. He trusted that no further damage would be inflicted on the Consulates.

I observed to him that it appeared from the telegram that the British Consulate was already destroyed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 539.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 550.)
My Lord, *Paris, June 27, 1877.*

THIS morning I spoke to the Duc Decazes in the sense of your Lordship's despatch No. 370 of the 20th instant, respecting the use of torpedoes by the Turks.

I said, with regard to the torpedoes already placed in the Bay of Suda, in Crete, that the Turkish Government could not well be asked to remove them, but that Her Majesty's Government had already made representations to the Porte respecting the careless way in which the Turks had been alleged to be laying torpedoes in the Danube, and that they would be quite ready to join the French Government in a recommendation to the Porte that wherever these engines were used, strict precautions should be taken to prevent accidents to neutral vessels.

The Duc Decazes answered that he had reason to believe that the representations of Her Majesty's Government had already produced a good effect, for he had received through the French Embassy at Constantinople a communication from the Turkish Government showing that they felt the necessity of taking due precautions with regard to the use of torpedoes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 540.

Lord Lyons to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 551.)
Paris, June 27, 1877.

My Lord,

THE Duc Decazes told me this morning that, on seeing about a fortnight ago statements in the newspapers that the Russian fleet had sailed from Cronstadt, he had directed General Leflô, the French Ambassador at St. Petersburgh, to make inquiries on the subject.

General Leflô had, the Duke said, received in reply from the Russian Government the most positive assurances that the Russian fleet had only gone out to exercise, and that it would not proceed to the Mediterranean. The Duc Decazes added that he had in fact been authorized by the Russian Government to state positively that no Russian naval force would appear in the Mediterranean.

The Duke told me that he had acted upon the authority thus given him, and had conveyed a statement to this effect to your Lordship through the Marquis d'Harcourt.

I have, &c.
(Signed) LYONS.

No. 541.

Mr. Stuart to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(Telegraphic.)
Athens, June 27, 1877.

ONE hundred and eighty cases of Turkish military accoutrements shipped on Austrian mail-packet at Constantinople for Prevesa, and reshipped on board the corresponding Austrian packet, after having been landed at Corfu, were transferred to a lighter, and detained at Corfu by order of Greek authorities, in consequence of protest of Russian Consul against transmission as a violation of neutrality.

The Porte now protests against detention, and has ordered a war steamer to proceed to Corfu to take possession of the cases, declaring that refusal will be treated as a violation of neutrality.

An announcement to this effect was made to M. Tricoupi this afternoon by Ottoman Minister in very overbearing terms.

M. Tricoupi, who has just left me, informed me that he intends to send Greek ships of war to Corfu as soon as possible to resist force by force if necessary, and he hopes that Her Majesty's Government and other neutral Powers will also send ships to protect the neutrality of Corfu from attack.

The Russian Minister had supported the protest of his Consul, and whether the Greek Government have been right or wrong in acting upon it I am convinced that they did so with a sincere desire to maintain an impartial neutrality, the Ottoman Minister having protested last year against transmission of arms from Corfu for Montenegro not then at war.

M. Tricoupi had before present announcement sent orders that the cases now in question might be re-embarked on board the next Austrian steamer for Trieste if the Austrian Consul desired it.

I have sent the above to Constantinople.

No. 542.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)
Bucharest, June 27, 1877.

COLONEL WELLESLEY reports:—"Nothing could be more satisfactory than the manner in which I was received this morning by Prince Gortchakow. His Highness said, in the kindest terms, that he trusted that the disagreeable incident connected with my reception at head-quarters would now be considered at an end, that the Emperor had desired him to invite me to His Majesty's headquarters, where I should be perfectly well received, both by the Emperor and the Grand Duke.

"I shall be attached in the same manner as my German and Austrian colleagues.

"I expressed to his Highness my gratitude for the manner in which he received me, and begged him to convey to His Majesty my most respectful thanks for his gracious invitation.

"Prince Gortchakow was anxious that the Queen and Her Majesty's Government should be immediately informed of the result of my interview.

"Prince Gortchakow at present ignores where the Imperial head-quarters are, but will communicate with me when he knows."

No. 543.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 203.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 28, 1877.

GRAND VIZIER informs me that the Montenegrins have horribly mutilated Turkish prisoners, statement which appears to be confirmed by Consul Green.

It is greatly to be feared that this may lead to terrible acts of retaliation, although I have been assured by Porte that the most peremptory orders have been given to the military authorities to prevent outrages, and to insure respect to the old men, women, and children.

No. 544.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 204.)
(Telegraphic.)
Constantinople, June 28, 1877.

I AM officially informed by the Porte that the beacons on Capo Sonta and Drepano in Crete will no longer be lighted, and no vessels are for the future to be allowed to approach places in that island where no port or sanitary station exists.

No. 545.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(Telegraphic.)
St. Petersburgh, June 28, 1877.

A RUSSIAN corps of 50,000 has crossed the Danube at Simnitza and occupied Sistova and surrounding heights.

No. 546.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28.)

(Telegraphic.)
Bucharest, June 28, 1877.

A LARGE Russian force crossed the Danube yesterday to Hirsova and effected a junction with the force which had crossed at Ibraila and advanced through the Dobrudja.

It is estimated that there are now at least 70,000 or 80,000 Russians south of the Danube, and the passage is proceeding very rapidly along the whole line.

Weather cool and the troops in high spirits.

Up to the present moment apparently no resistance.

No. 547.

The Earl of Derby to Consul Reade.

(Telegraphic.)
Foreign Office, June 28, 1877, 12·30 A.M.

I HAVE ascertained from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris that the French Minister of Foreign Affairs has requested Russian Ambassador there to urge that care

be taken that foreign Consulates at Rustchuk be not fired upon by the Russian batteries.

He has informed the French Consul that it would be inconsistent with his dignity to leave Rustchuk, unless his colleagues should do so.

I have made a similar communication to the Russian Ambassador here, who has promised to have the matter inquired into.

You should also remain at your post, unless the other Consuls leave.

No. 548.

*The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.**

Foreign Office, June 28, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

WITH reference to Mr. Stuart's telegram of the 27th, which has been repeated to your Excellency, on the subject of the detention of Turkish military accoutrements at Corfu, what are the facts of the case as represented at Constantinople?

The Porte should bear in mind that difficulties may arise under Article II of the Treaty between Great Britain, France, Russia, and Greece of March 29, 1864, unless the matter is dealt with judiciously.

No. 549.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1877.

(No. 247.)

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 606, Confidential, of the 13th instant, inclosing a report from Mr. Consul Blunt, in which he states what has been done towards carrying out the amnesty of the Bulgarian prisoners, and forwards a Petition signed by sixty-two Bulgarians who are still confined in the Mitrihané Prison at Constantinople; and I have to instruct your Excellency to urge the Porte to hasten the execution of the promise so solemnly given by the Sultan in regard to the amnesty of these prisoners.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 550.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1877.

(No. 267.)

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 602, Confidential, of the 12th instant, reporting the representations which you have made to the Porte in favour of Yovantcho Effendi, Haidar Bey, and Aziz Pasha, who have been deprived of their places in the Turkish service on account of the part taken by them in endeavouring to obtain the punishment of the Mussulmans accused of outrages on the Bulgarian Christians; and I have to state to you that your proceedings in the matter are entirely approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 551.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1877.

(No. 269.)

My Lord,

I RECEIVED from Her Majesty's Consul at Rustchuk on the 26th instant, the telegram of which I inclose a copy † stating the circumstances under which the British

* Repeated to Athens.

† No. 481.

Consulate had been destroyed by shells from the Russian batteries on the other side of the Danube.

I have thought it right to mention the matter to the Russian Ambassador, and to request that he would lose no time in informing his Government of the manner in which the part of Rustchuk where the foreign Consulates are situated had suffered from the Russian fire.

Count Schouvaloff said that he had already done so on reading the statement in the English newspapers to the same effect, and that he would inquire into the matter, and inform me without delay of any reply which he might receive.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 552.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 206.)

(Telegraphic.)

Constantinople, June 28, 1877.

I AM informed by Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Rapid" that Turks will probably not defend Kustendji lines, and that they are withdrawing from the Dobrudja, everything having been destroyed, and Christians being exposed to great outrages from Circassians and Tartars, many being killed.

Bulgarians, it is stated, began by attacking Mussulmans. This information has been confirmed to me from another trustworthy source, but I am afraid that the state of affairs where Turkish troops may have to withdraw and the Christians may be induced to rise will be very serious.

Turkish authorities are powerless.

No. 553.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 207.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, June 28, 1877, 6·40 P.M.

WITH reference to Mr. Stuart's telegram of yesterday, I have communicated with the Austrian Ambassador, who agrees with me in thinking that the Porte was justified in protesting against the detention of the cases containing clothes by the Greek Government at Corfu. He said that he would telegraph in this sense to Vienna, and had no doubt that the question would be settled and the cases forwarded to their destination. According to a telegram from the Turkish Minister at Athens to the Porte, the Greek Government will consider the dispatch of a Turkish ship-of-war to Corfu as an act of hostility, and consents to authorize the transportation of the cases to Trieste if the Austrian Consul at Corfu makes an official demand to that effect. I am endeavouring to prevail upon the Porte not to send ship-of-war.

Sent to Athens.

No. 554.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 29.)

(No. 208.)

(Telegraphic.)

Therapia, June 28, 1877, 10 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram of this morning No. 207, Minister for Foreign Affairs assures me that it was never the intention of the Porte to send ship-of-war to take away by force the cases of accoutrements seized at Corfu, but to have the case dealt with according to international law.

Sent to Athens.

No. 555.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 29.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 28, 1877, 10 P.M.*

TURKISH Minister of War informs me that orders have been sent to commence at once works for defence of Gallipoli Peninsula.

No. 556.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 28, at night.)

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June 28, 1877, 3 P.M.*

IT appears that there was more resistance to the Russian passage at Zimnicea that (than ?) at first reported. Loss stated to be from 1,000 to 1,200. Turkish loss supposed to be insignificant.

A passage was attempted at Turnu and was repulsed. This may be stated to have been merely a false attack.

Hundred thousand Russians are probably crossing at Zimnicea.

Nicopoli is in flames. Roustchouk heavily bombarded. Her Majesty's Consulate totally destroyed. Mr. Reade is safe.

No. 557.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1877, 3:30 P.M.*

INFORM Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's ships at Sulina that Admiralty wish protection to be afforded to vessels of Danubian Navigation Company if necessary.

No. 558.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1877, 4:20 P.M.*

HAVE you taken any steps with regard to the infraction of the capitulations in the cases of the two British subjects mentioned in despatch from Vice-Consul at Damascus of 10th instant ?

No. 559.

The Earl of Derby to Lord A. Loftus.

(Telegraphic.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1877, 4:30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of the 26th instant, you should act on my No. 253, which refers to coal intended for Her Majesty's ships in belligerent ports, whereas your despatch No. 328 relates to coal for Port Said. The certificates in one case will be issued by the Admiralty and in the other by the Russian Consul.

No. 560.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 25. Political.)
My Lord, *Adrianople, June 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, reporting the removal, without chains,

from Philippopolis of Ahmed Aga, Metto Bektash, and Ahmed Tchaoush, the three criminals implicated in the Batak massacre.

I have made inquiries here on the subject, and have been informed that the Porte has sent orders for these men to be sent to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 560.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopolis, June 14, 1877.*

I YESTERDAY morning had the honour to address to you in cypher the following telegram :—

"Ahmed Aga, Metto Bektash, and Ahmed Tchaoush were quietly despatched from here by rail for Adrianople on Friday, the 8th instant, unchained, and under escort of only two police officers."

In the evening, after the closing of the post, the message was returned to me with a verbal intimation to the effect that, in pursuance of superior orders, no cyphered telegrams or even open messages in any language but Turkish could be accepted.

This morning I received from the local director of the telegraph a copy of the order in question, according to which all telegraphic correspondence between Consular Officers must for the present be conducted in Turkish.

The removal of the three criminals mentioned above was in compliance with instructions received the previous day from the Vali of Adrianople. The prisoners were despatched to the railway station early in the morning, and with such secresy that even the railway officials were unaware of the circumstance until a day or two ago.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 561.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 26. Political.)
My Lord, *Adrianople, June 18, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a despatch from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, of Philippopolis, reporting the arbitrary collection of taxes from Tsarovo, one of the burnt villages in the Province of Tatar-Bazardjik.

I have brought this case to the special notice of the Vali of Adrianople, and have furnished his Excellency with the substance of Mr. Calvert's report.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 561.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Sir, *Philippopolis, June 14, 1877.*

THE head-men of the Bulgarian burnt village of Tsarovo, in the Caza of Tatar-Bazardjik, have this day come here to complain that the authorities of that district are demanding of them the "bedel" and "imlak" taxes, from which the Government promise that the burnt villages should be exempted.

They state that a zaptieh came to Tsarovo from Bazardjik on Sunday last, and on their demurring to pay the said taxes, forced a number of the villagers to sit the whole day naked and bareheaded in the sun, and that they ultimately paid him 4,000 piastres on account, for which he gave them a written receipt.

On my representing the case this afternoon to the Mutessarif, he reprobated the course pursued by the Bazardjik authorities, and promised that the conduct of the zaptieh should be inquired into; but, as regarded repayment of the 4,000 piastres extorted in

contravention of the Porte's instructions, he said that could not be effected without a special order from Constantinople, it being a tacit rule in the Administration that no sum once paid into the Government Treasuries can ever be returned.

His Excellency informed me also that, as no term has been fixed during which the exemption of the burnt villages from certain taxes is to continue, he has applied for instructions as to the duration of the exemption.

The determination of some definite period would take from the local authorities any excuse they may have at present for demanding the remitted taxes. To be of any real value to the distressed peasants, the exemption should extend over at least two or three years, and it should be specially decreed that the taxes in question shall not be considered to have accumulated at the end of that period, in other words, that the Government makes the peasantry a present of the taxes for a given period, and does not merely allow those taxes to fall into arrears.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 562.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 27. Political.)

Adrianople, June 18, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose to your Lordship the copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert, reporting a revival of lawlessness in the Sandjak of Philippopolis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 562.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopolis, June 14, 1877.

Sir,

I REGRET to have to report that the tranquillity of this district has latterly been disturbed by various robberies and acts of petty oppression in the villages committed by Turks on Bulgarians.

In the neighbourhood of Avrat-Alan and Otlouk-Keui thefts of cattle and highway robberies are again becoming common, the chief delinquents being Circassians and deserters from the Redif regiments stationed beyond the Balkans.

In the village of Dumanly a Bulgarian peasant was about a fortnight ago robbed in his house by twelve armed and disguised men of some 700*l.* Turkish in cash, besides valuables. From the destroyed village of Radilovo a flock of 250 goats was about the same time seized by four Pomak outlaws. In the former case three Turks of Dumanly have been arrested and brought to town, one of whom was recognized by the wife of the plundered peasant. As regards the stolen goats, a force of zaptiehs has been sent after the robbers, and they have already succeeded in recapturing over 100 head, but the robbers themselves have hitherto eluded pursuit.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 563.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 28. Political.)

Adrianople, June 19, 1877.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship the inclosed copies of despatches which have passed through this Consulate relative to the non-payment of the stipends promised by the Porte to the priests of the destroyed villages in the sandjak of Philippopolis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 563.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

(Extract.)

Philippopolis, May 22, 1877.

IN connection with the subject of Government relief, I regret to say that the monthly stipend, which the Porte announced its intention of bestowing on the priests of the destroyed villages, has not been paid. The failure to carry out this intention is to be the more lamented, inasmuch as it bears out the anticipations of those whom past experience has rendered incredulous as regards Turkish promises.

Inclosure 2 in No. 563.

Consul Blunt to Mr. Layard.

Adrianople, May 30, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Acting Vice-Consul Calvert's despatch to your Excellency of the 22nd instant, a copy of which Mr. Calvert has also addressed to me, I have the honour to state that I mentioned to the Vali of Adrianople the reported non-payment of the stipends promised by the Porte to the priests of the destroyed villages in the Sandjak of Philippopolis.

His Excellency informed me in reply that the Commission of Relief, instituted by the Porte and presided over by Abro Effendi, is alone competent to deal with the matter in question, the provincial authorities having no control over the proceedings of that Commission.

I would respectfully submit to your Excellency that it therefore appears desirable that the attention of the Porte should be called to this point, in order that the Imperial Commission be instructed to allot part of the funds placed at its disposal to the redemption of the promise made by the Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 3 in No. 563.

Consul Blunt to Acting Vice-Consul Calvert.

Adrianople, June 10, 1877.

Sir,

HAVING mentioned to the Vali the non-payment of the stipend promised by the Porte to the priests of the destroyed villages, as reported in your despatch of the 22nd ultimo, his Excellency informed me in reply that the Commission of Relief, instituted by the Porte and presided over by Abro Effendi, was alone competent to deal with that matter, the provincial authorities having no control over the proceedings of the Imperial Commission.

I reported accordingly to Her Majesty's Ambassador, and have received from his Excellency the following telegram, dated yesterday:—

"The Minister of the Interior has telegraphed to the Vali inquiring why the Commission has not paid the stipends promised by the Porte to the clergy."

I have to instruct you to report to me, for Mr. Layard's information, what action has now been taken in the matter.

You will at the same time ascertain and inform me whether it be true, as has been stated to Ali Pasha, that the character of some of the priests in question renders them in certain cases unworthy of relief; and that whereas the Commission desires to pay the money direct to those whom it is intended to relieve, the Bulgarian Archbishop requires it to be made over to himself for distribution.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 4 in No. 563.

Acting Vice-Consul Calvert to Consul Blunt.

Philippopolis, June 14, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch of the 10th instant, I have the honour to inform you that I have conferred severally with the President of the Imperial Commission, the Mutesarrif, and the Bulgarian Suffragan Bishop of Philippopolis, on the subject of the stipends promised to the clergy of the destroyed villages.

Their Excellencies Abro Effendi and the Mutesarrif state, as the reason for the non-payment of these stipends, that the Bulgarian Bishop was requested by the Commission to draw up a list of priests deserving assistance, and notify to them the intention of bestowing temporary pensions upon them, in order that they might apply for the money to the local Treasury; but that his Eminence, in the first place, presented a list in which were the names of priests who, but for the amnesty, would have been executed, and one of whom was still in prison; and, secondly, demanded that the whole amount of the stipends should be made over to him for distribution.

The Bulgarian Bishop, on the other hand, affirmed to me that the Turkish authorities had taken exception to his list without pointing out the individual names to which they objected, although he requested them to state those names; and that he merely suggested, as a mode of payment more convenient to the recipients, that the money should be distributed by himself.

The Mutesarrif positively assures me that the names of the objectionable priests—about five or six out of 40—were indicated by him to the Bishop; but that the latter neither modified his list nor sent to the Treasury the priests approved of by the Government.

His Excellency promises that whenever the priests entitled to relief present themselves at the konak their stipends will be paid, including the arrears accumulated since the issue of the order granting those stipends.

To put an end to all misunderstanding with the Bishop I proposed to the Mutesarrif that he should communicate to his Eminence the names unacceptable to the Government. He declined to do this, but promised to communicate the names to me.

As regards the forty Mussulman village imams who were to have participated in this charity, and who have also remained unpaid, the Mutesarrif informed me that they had never applied for their money. The truth appears to be that they were never informed that relief was available to them on application.

I have, &c.
(Signed) F. R. J. CALVERT.

No. 564.

Consul Blunt to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 29. Political.)

Adrianople, June 20, 1877.

My Lord,

MR. VICE-CONSUL DUPUIS reported to me in a despatch dated the 9th instant, a copy of which I have the honour to inclose to your Lordship, that great disorders were stated to exist in the Caza of Demotica.

I consequently instructed Mr. Dupuis to proceed to the district in question, in order to inquire into the state of things there. Your Lordship will observe with pleasure from his two reports on the result of that visit, copies of which I beg also to inclose, that the alleged outrages were in some instances grossly exaggerated, and in others totally devoid of foundation.

Unfortunately, there seems to be a growing disposition on the part of a section of the foreign Greek community in these parts to invent sensational stories calculated to discredit Ottoman administration. It is worthy of notice, however, that the Greek Archbishop of Adrianople, as well as the Archbishop of Demotica, and indeed the Greek clergy in this vilayet generally, lend no countenance to these intrigues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 564.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, June 9, 1877.

Sir,

A STATE of things incompatible with good order is reported on the 3rd instant to exist in the Caza of Demotica, which, if true, loudly calls for the interference of the local Government.

It is stated that Turkish and Circassian deserters from the army infest that part of the country, and commit all kinds of depredations on peaceable travellers, which greatly interferes with and hinders all traffic and internal communication between the villages.

It is alleged that travellers are attacked and stripped, and even killed if they offer resistance. In this manner horses and cattle are daily being carried off, as well as beasts of burden after being stripped of their loads, and the traffic in mulberry leaves for the silk-worms is greatly abandoned through fear of going into the plantations.

From Orfakeuy it is reported that upwards of ten horses have been carried off, and robbery and pillage of all kinds is on the increase; while at Drobitchka and Aidanchori the mulberry-trees have been cut down and destroyed by known Turks of neighbouring villages.

It is further reported that a party of twenty irregulars lately visited the village of Arnaoutkeuy, where they remained a day and a night, and conducted themselves the while in a very disorderly manner, and beat the men for refusing to bring women to them.

How far all this may be true I cannot say, but I may mention that when I visited that locality in April last a list of twenty villages was given me where disorders of all kinds had, more or less, been perpetrated.

I did not fail yesterday to make known to his Excellency the Governor-General the state of affairs in the Caza of Demotica.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 2 in No. 564.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, June 17, 1877.

Sir,

WITH reference to your despatch of the 10th instant, instructing me to proceed to the Caza of Demotica to inquire into and report upon the condition of that district with respect to disorders committed there, I have the honour to state that I started for that locality on the 13th instant, and returned last night.

On my way thither I visited the villages of Sumarun, Aidanchori, Ortakeuy, Letitza Zurnazan, Akalan, Imledin, Kadikeuy, Bulgarkeuy, and Demotica.

In all those places I had interviews with the leading inhabitants, both Mussulmans and Christians, as well as the Kaimakam and Greek Archbishop of Demotica, and having made careful and particular inquiries as to the state of things in that part of the country, I found that, while some of the disorders complained of were alarmingly and designedly exaggerated by the Christians (Greeks especially), others were totally devoid of foundation.

It is true, however, that all the villages I visited had, more or less, recently suffered from robberies and raids on cattle, and that numerous horses, buffaloes, oxen, and sheep had been carried off by Circassian and gipsy cattle-stealers; but I failed to discover that life was endangered.

Travelling and out-door occupations of all kinds appeared to me to be carried on as actively and safely as in ordinary times, and the frequenting of plantations for the purpose of gathering mulberry leaves for silkworms left no reason in my mind to believe in the abandonment of that industry in consequence of disorders, as was alleged. I was also struck at the great numbers of field labourers out at work, especially women and girls, who were employed in all kinds of field operations, and preparing the land for the ensuing crops of sesame, melons, Indian corn, grapes, &c.

The story of the twenty irregulars mentioned in my despatch of the 9th instant having grossly misconducted themselves at Arnaoutkeuy by beating the peasantry for not bringing women to them, turns out to be a distortion of a simple fact. Two volunteers, I was informed, did visit that place, but, beyond eating and drinking at

the expense of the villagers, they in no way maltreated the people, much less called for women to be brought them. Nevertheless, their conduct having been disapproved, they were imprisoned.

The alleged wanton destruction of mulberry plantations by Turks in Aidanohori and Drebitska is also untrue. Stefan Georghi, of the former place, told me he found two cherry-trees cut down, but could not tell by whom; while Angheli, of the latter village, lost a cow; but neither of them complained of mulberry plantations having been destroyed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

Inclosure 3 in No. 564.

Vice-Consul Dupuis to Consul Blunt.

Adrianople, June 18, 1877.

Sir,

BEFORE setting out for Demotica on the 13th instant, the Greek Consul read me extracts from private letters from the interior of this province detailing horrible outrages alleged to have been committed about the beginning of this month on Christians in the Caza of Demotica. I took a note of these, with a view to ascertain the truth of the reports, and, as you may also have heard of them, I think it right to acquaint you with the result of my inquiries.

The first outrage was, that at Sirt Karakilissé brigands had entered a Christian dwelling, and, after maltreating and beating the proprietor, and cutting off the breasts of his wife, they robbed the premises of 8,000 piastres.

Having seen and conversed with the victims of this outrage, they related to me that their house was forcibly entered by some Circassians; that Dimitrioglu Staïko, the proprietor, was beaten, as well as his wife; but that the latter only caught the blows intended for her husband as she threw herself upon him to protect him. Some 300 piastres were carried off, but I need scarcely say that the woman's breasts were not cut off, as was stated. There is no doubt that both these people were shamefully beaten.

The second alleged outrage occurred at Soudi, where it was stated that a Christian, while out in a mulberry plantation, was shot dead, and his horse stolen.

On inquiry, I found that a Christian was accidentally shot by a sportsman, but his horse was not stolen.

The third outrage was said to have taken place at Buyuk Derbend. It was stated at first that Pascal Tchanko, a Bulgarian, had been murdered by Turks and afterwards robbed of 100 Turkish pounds.

On my inquiring into this affair, a totally different version of it was related to me, the true facts being as follows:—

Hassan, a Turk, and Pascal Tchanko combined together and murdered the Mollah Izzet Effendi, of Demotica, who had gone to the above-mentioned village to collect money due to him. The murder took place in Tchanko's house, but it is said that it was Hassan who, with a hatchet, killed the Mollah. Both the assassins are now in prison at Demotica.

The last story was, that at Mandritza a Bulgarian had been murdered, and his horse stolen. This is altogether false. There was simply a quarrel among the Christians themselves, but it did not result in the death of anybody.

The inhabitants of the village of Aidanohori having complained of being harshly treated by Dervish Aga, a Turkish farmer, I mentioned the subject to the Kaïmakam of Demotica, who promised to send for the man complained against, and would admonish him to live in harmony with his Christian neighbours.

Complaints having also been made to me that a notorious gipsy cattle-stealer named Durgut, of Demirler, had recently robbed Nikolaki Stefo, a Christian of Ortakeuy, of his horse, clothes, and 250 piastres, the Kaïmakam assured me that orders would be given to have the man arrested and punished.

Sherif Effendi, a tithe-collector, having rendered himself obnoxious to the residents of Ortakeuy by beating Costandi Christo, of Kirk-Kilissé, between whom and Sherif a dispute as to the payment of the tithe on cocoons, the Kaïmakam, on my representing to him the matter, at once ordered his removal from Ortakeuy.

The Greek Archbishop and Talet Bey, the Governor of Demotica, told me that such was the social condition of that place, that no two persons could be found there to agree on anything—Mussulmans as well as Christians; and from what I could learn it seemed

to me that there were two parties, for and against the Kaïmakam. The Archbishop spoke in terms of commendation of the Governor, and said he was scarcely fairly treated by his own Government, which had rewarded the Cadi with a decoration after the Bulgarian insurrection but had failed to recognize the services of the Kaïmakam, which lowered him in the eyes of the public, and begged to recommend him to the Governor-General with the view to his obtaining some recognition or encouragement.

It further appeared to me that the Christians of Demotica imagine that now is the time to hold up the Turks to execration by magnifying their shortcomings. A miserable attempt to take advantage of my presence there was made by getting up a noisy, clamorous demonstration against two or three drunken zaptiehs, one of whom, falling against a cart in a narrow street, flew into a passion with the Greek driver and struck him with his undrawn sword. This was enough to arouse the anger of the populace, and immediately hundreds of Greeks collected around my carriage, yelling and screaming that the Turks were beating them, and "doing what they liked with them." This inopportune display seemed to displease the Archbishop. The Kaïmakam ordered the arrest of the zaptiehs, and the mob was pacified.

In conclusion, I beg to observe that the Caza of Demotica is both extensive and thickly populated, and the executive force for the maintenance of order totally inadequate, there being only twenty mounted and some twenty-five foot zaptiehs.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. HUTTON DUPUIS.

No. 565.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 34. Political.)

My Lord,

Canea, Crete, June 12, 1877.

IT was only on the 10th instant that the copy of the report reached me which Mr. Vice-Consul Calocherinos had the honour of addressing to your Lordship on the subject of the profanation of certain churches in the eastern half of this island.

As your Lordship is aware, I had instructed Mr. Calocherinos to proceed himself to make the necessary investigation; but he telegraphed to me to request that his brother, who is Dragoman of the Vice-Consulate, might undertake the mission for him, an arrangement I assented to, as he had just sustained a severe affliction in the loss of his wife.

There are two statements in the report which by their vagueness convey an exaggerated idea of the misdeeds of the soldiers, which were bad enough without the aid of insinuation to aggravate them. I refer to the two passages where it is said that "many other chapels of other localities have had a similar lot," and the closing paragraph about shameful scenes of attempts at violating women being of daily occurrence.

I have under my eyes copies of the original petitions presented by the Elders of the two villages of Malia and Vulismenee, where these disgraceful scenes occurred, addressed to the Bishops of the respective dioceses in which they are situated. The list of the offences committed by the soldiers therein enumerated corresponds accurately enough with those charged against them in Mr. Calocherinos' report, though I may remark that the Greek word εἰκόνας should be translated pictures and not images, which, as every one knows, have no place in sanctuaries of the Greek Church. I have also had the advantage of comparing Mr. Calocherinos' report with that sent to my Greek colleague by his subordinate in Candia, who is no friendly witness, and he enumerates every single case of sacrilege that has occurred since these reprehensible acts began. The first took place on March 20th at a village called Stalida where some wax tapers were robbed from the chapel of St. Demetrius; the second in the same village, at the Chapel of St. John of Chrysostom, on the 8th of April, where a lamp was stolen. Again, at the mortuary chapel of Neapolis some soldiers robbed wax tapers from an open window, and threw stones inside, and they acted similarly in the Church of the Cross at the same place. At the Church of the Virgin, in Latsida, they threw down a cross on May 11th. On April 29th they profaned the church of Vulismenu, spoken of in the report; and their acts finally culminated in a second and more indecent profanation of the same church on the 14th May; and on the following day other soldiers committed an abominable sacrilege in the Church of the Holy Ghost at Malia, the other village named in the report.

I now come to the latter accusation, that attempts at violating women were of daily occurrence. The soldiers have, it appears, been allowed to roam in small parties over the

country adjacent to their block-houses, where they are accused of making free with the fruit-trees and vineyards of the inhabitants, and of pursuing boys and village girls with evil purpose. It is highly probable that a few attempts at violating women and boys have been made, and such, indeed, are cited in the original documents drawn up by the elders; yet the fact remains that no case of rape has actually occurred, nor have I, during several years' residence in Crete, heard of a crime of the kind committed either by regular or irregular troops. It is only fair to state this, because a false impression is conveyed by the wording of the Vice-Consul's Report. A soldier may attempt to snatch a kiss from a village girl without being necessarily exposed to the odious imputation of wishing to violate her.

Your Lordship will, I am confident, acquit me of any desire to extenuate the faults laid to the charge of the soldiers. I have no sort of doubt that they have been guilty of the specific acts complained of, and that their want of discipline has created a certain terror in their neighbourhood. It is evident that the discipline has been culpably lax, and their officers, from the Commander-in-chief down to the Major of the offending battalion, are chiefly chargeable for their conduct. The Turkish soldier is generally most inoffensive and amenable to discipline, and where due strictness is maintained, as in the garrison of this town, few complaints of their conduct are heard. I have never flinched from exposing in my despatches the evils and shortcomings of the Turkish Administration, but neither, on the other hand, will I set down aught in malice or in prejudice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

P.S.—I have sent a copy of this despatch to Mr. Calocherinos, whom I have hitherto always found most guarded in his official statements. It is important, as we are probably on the eve of grave events, that he should take the greatest possible care in substantiating alleged facts.

T. B. S.

No. 566.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 37. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June* 18, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that the local authorities are refusing permission to the Cretans to quit the island without special leave. Several applications from Christians for leave to depart have been refused, and it is acknowledged that the measure has not been ordered by the Porte. Before and during the last insurrection, no obstacle was placed in the way of any one who desired to leave by the ordinary steamers, and had the means of doing so, and a considerable exodus of Christian families took place. The step appears as impolitic as it is arbitrary, and calculated at any moment to create a panic amongst the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 567.

Consul Sandwith to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 38. Political.)
My Lord, *Canea, Crete, June* 19, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that I have just received a despatch dated yesterday from Mr. Trifilli, the Consular Agent at Rethymo, who makes the following report:—

That the Christian inhabitants of certain villages near Arghyropolis (the chief village of one of the sub-districts of Rethymo) are refusing to pay the tithes, telling the tax-gatherer that since the Government affords them no protection, and that justice does not exist, they cannot pay the tithes. On the tax-gatherer demanding their answer in writing, the villagers wrote it down.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS B. SANDWITH.

No. 568.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 655.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June* 21, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a Report from Sir Collingwood Dickson, containing remarks on military and Consular Reports from Europe and Asia, and also the copy of a Report from Sir Arnold Kemball just received.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. H. LAYARD.

Inclosure 1 in No. 568.

Lieutenant-General Sir C. Dickson to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Therapia, June* 20, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to submit to your Excellency a summary of the reports received during the past week from the officers employed in Bulgaria and in Asia, which are being forwarded home this day, together with extracts from those of Her Majesty's Consuls on the movements of troops, &c.

During the past week Colonel Lennox reported that the defences of Varna are making fair progress, but much yet remains to be done there. The Russians are not reported to have made any attempts to pass the Danube, the waters of which are still very high; and the Turks have been using the time gained to improve the defences of their fortresses.

Colonel Lennox forwards a report of the parade of a division of all arms at Shumla, on the 9th instant, which speaks of it very favourably. This division consisted of about 8,800 men on parade, with five batteries of horse and field artillery (thirty guns), and two squadrons of cavalry (115 in all). This division turned out in complete marching order, ready for the field, with transport for its baggage, intrenching tools, and ammunition, also ambulances; but though the troops are said to have carried four days' rations (biscuits), there was no opportunity of judging how far the transport for provisioning this force in the field had been organized. Colonel Lennox has not yet stated whether the mobile divisions at Rustchuk, Silistria, and Widdin, are similarly prepared for taking the field by parades, &c.

Colonel Lennox and Lieutenant Chermside both report that the Circassians are being assembled in large numbers at various places on the Danube, and have been supplied with swords and Winchester rifles; but it appears that little reliance can be placed upon them to oppose the Russian cavalry, owing to their want of discipline and organization. Sir A. Kemball makes the same statement regarding the Circassians in Asia.

The reports both from Asia and Europe state that the mounted zaptiehs from the provinces are being incorporated with the regular cavalry.

From Sir A. Kemball's reports during the past week, it appears that some improvement has taken place in the Turkish military situation in Armenia. Ahmed Mukhtar Pasha's army has again occupied Olti, Bardez, &c., from which the Russians had retired. Large reinforcements of troops have been, and are still being, sent to join Mukhtar's army; and this increase of strength ought to enable him to make a successful resistance to the Russians.

About 4,000 men (Mustafiz) have also been sent to Batoum, so that a very considerable force must now be there. There has been little news from Kars, except reports that several attempted assaults by the Russians have been repulsed, and a successful sortie is said to have been made by the garrison.

It is reported from Erzeroum that an engagement took place a few days ago between Toprak Kalé and Delibaba, in which a Turkish division of 6 battalions, with artillery, had an engagement with the Russians, which lasted five hours, and in which the Ferik in command was killed, and the Turks fell back upon Delibaba. No report of this affair has yet been received from Sir A. Kemball. It is presumed that advantage is being taken of the time now available to complete the defences of Erzeroum and the positions in its vicinity.

I am informed by Consul Blunt from Adrianople that the works of defence at the Shipka Pass are now being prepared; and also those at Adrianople, where 800 labourers are employed on them. Telegraphic communication has been established between Kazan, Slimna, and Shumla, and the military roads between those places repaired. Kazan is an important strategical point in the Balkans. I hear also that the defences of the other

passes in the Balkans are being rapidly carried on. I am therefore enabled to notice the progress made in preparing the defences of the Balkan passes.

By letter from Her Majesty's Consul at Crete of 10th instant, 3 battalions of Mustaphiz, of 1,200 each, are reported as arriving on 9th instant at Suda from Constantinople, to replace 3 battalions of Nizam and 1 battalion of Redifs, which were to leave for Constantinople, on 11th instant, to proceed to the seat of war in Europe. 13 Krupp guns (heavy) have been sent to Suda Bay to be mounted in the works there, and 20 torpedoes are said to have arrived to be laid down at the entrance of the bay.

The Vice-Consul at Dardanelles, by letter dated 16th instant, reports that the following troops passed through the Dardanelles *en route* for Constantinople between 9th and 16th instant, viz.:—

2,500 volunteers from Smyrna district.
2,500 Mustafiz " "
2,500 Nizam from Crete.
6,000 infantry (Egyptian) from Alexandria.
4 unhorsed batteries of field artillery (Egyptian) from Alexandria.

He states that horses for the Egyptian field artillery are to be purchased in Turkey, and also that 346 cavalry (mounted zaptiehs) have marched into Dardanelles from Smyrna, and are waiting transport.

Vice-Consul Jago reports from Damascus, by letter dated 9th June, that the last batch of Redifs of the 3rd Ban—force 875 men—left Damascus for Beyrout. The Mustafiz have not yet been called out, but measures have been taken to that end. Orders have come to enrol and dispatch from the district of the 5th corps d'armée 3,000 cavalry volunteers, 192 of whom will be provided by the city of Damascus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. DICKSON, *Military Attaché.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 568.

Major-General Sir A. Kemball to Mr. Layard.

Khorassan, June 6, 1877.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to subjoin a telegram which I have this day addressed to your Excellency, after holding communication with Moukhtar Pasha; I found his Excellency anxiously awaiting the issue of the impending attack upon Kars. His Excellency dwelt upon the impossibility on his part of extending relief to the place or of impeding the operations of the assailants for its reduction. I argue from the lack of provisions in his camp, from the distance of his supply depôts, from his want of transport, and from his inability to detach in succession a sufficient body of troops to protect his convoys from the attacks of the enemy's cavalry that he will find it equally difficult to maintain his present position after the enemy shall have disengaged his forces by the capture of Kars, or failing therein shall mask that place and shall march upon Erzeroum. As regards his deficiency of cavalry, his Excellency informed me that he has received authority from the Porte to organize his Circassian levies into regiments, under the leadership of competent Turkish officers, and to assign to each man the usual rations and hay at the rate of 150 piastres per month. Reinforcements of regular cavalry, "Nizam," had been promised to him from Baghdad, Aleppo, and Constantinople, as well as baggage cattle from the neighbouring vilayets, but he is aware that they can hardly reach his camp over such great distances in time for the purposes of the present campaign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) A. KEMBALL.

P.S.—I have detached Captains McCalmont and Trotter to follow the operations of the Turkish troops on the line from Olti to Erzeroum.

A. B. K.

No. 569.

Acting Consul Barker to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

(No. 44. Political.)

My Lord, *Salonica, June* 20, 1877.

I HAVE the honour to transmit, herewith inclosed, a copy of a despatch which I have this day addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at the Porte, referring to an intended landing of slaves in this bay from Bengazi, the death of a noted brigand chief, and the inconvenience arising from the restrictions put on the telegraph service.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 1 in No. 569.

Acting Consul Barker to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Salonica, June* 20, 1877.

AS soon as I received your Excellency's telegram informing me of the intended landing here of slaves from Bengazi, I addressed a letter in French to the Defterdar, who is acting as Governor-General of this vilayet, copy of which I have the honour to inclose herewith. I sent also a telegram to Smyrna to Captain Beamish, commanding Her Majesty's ship "Pallas," who has instructions to be also on this station, informing him of their expected arrival.

Your Excellency may rely on my continuing to urge on the authorities here that active steps be taken to prevent their being landed clandestinely.

Robberies and murders continue to be frequent in the three vilayets of my Consular district, but they are perpetrated by brigands, and have no political character. One of these robber chiefs, by name "Karabatak," who has been an outlaw for twelve years, has at last been killed by "Younez Ghegha," the brigand mentioned in my despatch of the 12th May last, as having declared "he would capture other brigands."

"Younez," accompanied by some Christian peasants armed, and some "zaptiehs," came upon the band, twenty-two in number, at three hours distance from Vodina. Some were asleep and some were playing cards. Karabatak fired at Younez, and wounded him, but on getting up to come to closer quarters a volley from the zaptiehs killed him and some of his men; many, however, escaped. His head has been taken to Vodina.

The Consular corps in this city are not allowed to telegraph to any part of the Greek provinces of Turkey in any language except Turkish. To Constantinople in an European language. Cyphered telegrams are totally prohibited to any direction.

This prohibition will prevent my communicating by telegram at all with the Vice-Consuls, or with Her Majesty's naval officers, because telegrams *en clair* are made public by the telegraph clerks who are surrounded by inquisitive persons anxious to hear news.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD B. B. BARKER.

Inclosure 2 in No. 569.

Acting Consul Barker to the Governor-General of the Province of Salonica.

M. le Defterdar, *Salonique, le* 18 *Juin,* 1877.

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que j'ai reçu avis de la part de son Excellence l'Ambassadeur de Sa Majesté la Reine à la Sublime Porte, comme aussi un autre avis de Bengazi, qu'un bâtiment Ottoman nommé "Bel Moro" est parti de Bengazi le 16 du courant, ayant à son bord des esclaves destinés à être débarqués à Salonique ou dans le Golfe de Salonique, et j'ai l'honneur de vous prier, avec instance, de vouloir bien donner des ordres les plus rigoureux et prendre les mesures les plus efficaces afin que ces esclaves, qui sont sous la direction du nommé "Salem Gherkei" (ou "Gharkemeh"), ne soient pas débarqués illicitement sans la connaissance de l'autorité dans ce vilayet.

Comme le navire est parti le 16 du courant, il y aura assez de temps, avant son arrivée, pour que ces mesures que vous prendrez soient efficaces, si elles sont immédiates.

Veuillez, &c.

(Signé) E. B. B. BARKER.

No. 570.

Acting Consul Joly to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 6. Political.)

My Lord, *Smyrna, June 22, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship, herewith inclosed, copy of a despatch with its inclosure, which I addressed on the 20th instant to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople, relative to the conduct of the Circassians in the district of Aivali, and the insufficiency of the police force to protect the Christians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure 1 in No. 570.

Acting Consul Joly to Mr. Layard.

Sir, *Smyrna, June 20, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Excellency, herewith inclosed, copy of a despatch, which came late to hand on the 16th instant, from Mr. Vice-Consul Marato, at Aivali, relative to certain events occurring in that district, and on the receipt of the same I immediately hastened to forward to your Excellency the following telegram in cypher:—

"Public security, Aivali district alarming, daily atrocities committed by Circassians against Christians, authorities negligent, police force insufficient, assistance required."

I have directed Mr. Marato to investigate and report to me the cases of atrocities mentioned in his despatch, and if necessary to proceed himself to the spot to verify the truth of the same, in accordance to instructions which I already furnished him on May 31 last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) STEPHEN JOLY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 570.

Vice-Consul Marato to Acting Consul Joly.

Sir, *Aivali, June 15, 1877.*

I HAVE the honour to state that after the hideous murdering of the Christians committed by the Turks, as reported by my letter of the 7th instant, I regret to say that public security in the district of this Vice-Consulate has been reduced to a very sad condition.

According to our information from the interior, the disposition of Turkish fanaticism against Christians through actual circumstances has been manifested in different ways, and the carelessness of the local authorities has brought things to such a state that from the beginning of last week we had to witness daily acts of atrocities perpetrated not two hours from this place, by Circassians on Christians, inhabitants of this town, whilst going to their farms for harvest.

Last Sunday more than thirty peasants complained to the local authorities of this town that armed bands of Circassians and natives were infesting intrepidly the adjacent parts, not only have stolen their horses, but many of them have been wounded by firearms by these savage men.

For the moment a few guards (who are for watching yearly the olive trees in the jurisdiction of this town and paid by the same peasants) have been ordered to move to the spot where the agricultural labourers have been murdered, and where they are at present busy, but only to protect them in case of need.

It is, therefore, indispensably necessary that active measures should be taken for the public security, and orders to be addressed to the Pasha of Balukesser to that effect.

I have, &c.

(Signed) T. P. MARATO.

No. 571.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June 29, 1877.*

IT is reported that the Russians have crossed the Danube in force at Oltenitza. No details obtainable.

No. 572.

Lieutenant-Colonel Mansfield to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Confidential.) *Bucharest, June 29, 1877, 5·40 P.M.*

COLONEL WELLESLEY has furnished Prince Gortchakow with a copy of his despatch No. 2 to your Lordship, dated June 27, at the request of his Highness.

No. 573.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 211.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 30, 1877, 12·10 A.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram of yesterday, the affair of the detention of Turkish military accoutrements at Corfu is satisfactorily settled. The Porte declares that Turkish Minister at Athens was not authorized to make any threats that if a Turkish vessel was sent to Corfu it was to receive the cases, and not with a view to take them by force. Greek Minister expresses himself satisfied with this explanation, and is ready to leave the question of the right of the Greek authorities to detain the cases to arbitration.

(Sent to Athens.)

No. 574.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(No. 212.)

(Telegraphic.) *Therapia, June 30, 1877.*

TELEGRAM from Vice-Consul at Kustendjie states that no excesses have been committed by Turkish soldiers, but by marauders. The Bulgarians did not take up arms when the Russians crossed the Danube.

No. 575.

Mr. Layard to the Earl of Derby.—(Received June 30.)

(Telegraphic.)

(Private and Most Confidential.) *Therapia, June 29, 1877.*

THE Russians having effected the crossing of the Danube at Sistova and in the Dobrutscha are advancing on one side to Tirnova and on the other to the Kustendje lines, which I understand the Turks cannot defend. The aspect of affairs is consequently very serious, and I venture to think Her Majesty's Government should come to some decision as to the course to be pursued, and should give me as soon as possible some definite instructions. At present everything is quiet here.

No. 576.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(Telegraphic.)
(Confidential.)
Foreign Office, June 30, 1877.

I HAVE received your private and most confidential telegram of the 29th. It has been seen by the Cabinet. It is decided that the fleet shall go again to Besika Bay. Probably, also, the naval force in the Mediterranean will be strengthened. The difficulty of your position is fully understood here. Your despatches have been read with great interest. It is impossible to have done more than you have, or to have done it more judiciously.

No. 577.

Sir A. Buchanan to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

Vienna, June 30, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

I AM told here that the conflict between the Turkish and Greek Governments, referred to in your Lordship's telegrams of yesterday, will be arranged by the cases detained at Corfu being forwarded to Trieste, and the Lloyd Navigation Company will be reprimanded for having embarked them at Constantinople.

No. 578.

Lord A. Loftus to the Earl of Derby.—(*Received June* 30.)

St. Petersburgh, June 30, 1877.

(Telegraphic.)

I HAVE acted on your Lordship's despatch No. 253, and have submitted to Imperial Government proposed Admiralty Certificate.

Minister for Foreign Affairs told me to-day that he saw no objection to it, and that Imperial Government, wishing to prevent any difficulty in regard to coal-ships in general, has authorized Count Schouvaloff to settle and decide all questions relating thereto with Her Majesty's Government.

No. 579.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 260. Confidential.)
Sir,
Foreign Office, June 30, 1877.

YOUR Private and Confidential telegram of the 29th instant, reporting the critical state of affairs in Turkey consequent upon the passage of the Danube by the Russian armies, was considered at a meeting of the Cabinet this day; and I have to inform you that it has been decided by Her Majesty's Government that the fleet should forthwith proceed to Besika Bay, and that steps will probably be taken for strengthening the British naval force in the Mediterranean.

Your Excellency's Most Confidential despatch No. 631 of the 19th instant, in regard to the terms of peace confidentially proposed by Russia, has been read with great interest, as well as your other despatches bearing on this subject and on the position and prospects of the Turkish Empire. The difficulty of your position is fully understood by Her Majesty's Government, and I have great pleasure in assuring your Excellency of their high approval and of their conviction that it would be impossible to have acted with greater energy, ability, and judgment than you have shown in the performance of your duties as Her Majesty's Ambassador.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

END.

No. 580.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 262.)
Sir,
Foreign Office, June 30, 1877.

YOUR despatch No. 626 of the 17th instant has been received, and I have to state to you that Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the representations which you have addressed to the Porte on the subject of the outrages committed by Circassians and other marauders in different parts of the Turkish Empire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.

No. 581.

The Earl of Derby to Mr. Layard.

(No. 263.)
Sir,
Foreign Office, June 30, 1877.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 645 of June 20, forwarding copy of a despatch from Mr. Consul Blunt, in which he reports his proceedings in the matter of the Bulgarian amnesty; and I have to request that you will convey to Mr. Blunt my approval of his proceedings, as reported in his above-mentioned despatch.

I am, &c.
(Signed) DERBY.